FRAGMENTS

AUTOBIOGRAPHY AND LATER WRITINGS

BY

SILAS H. DURAND

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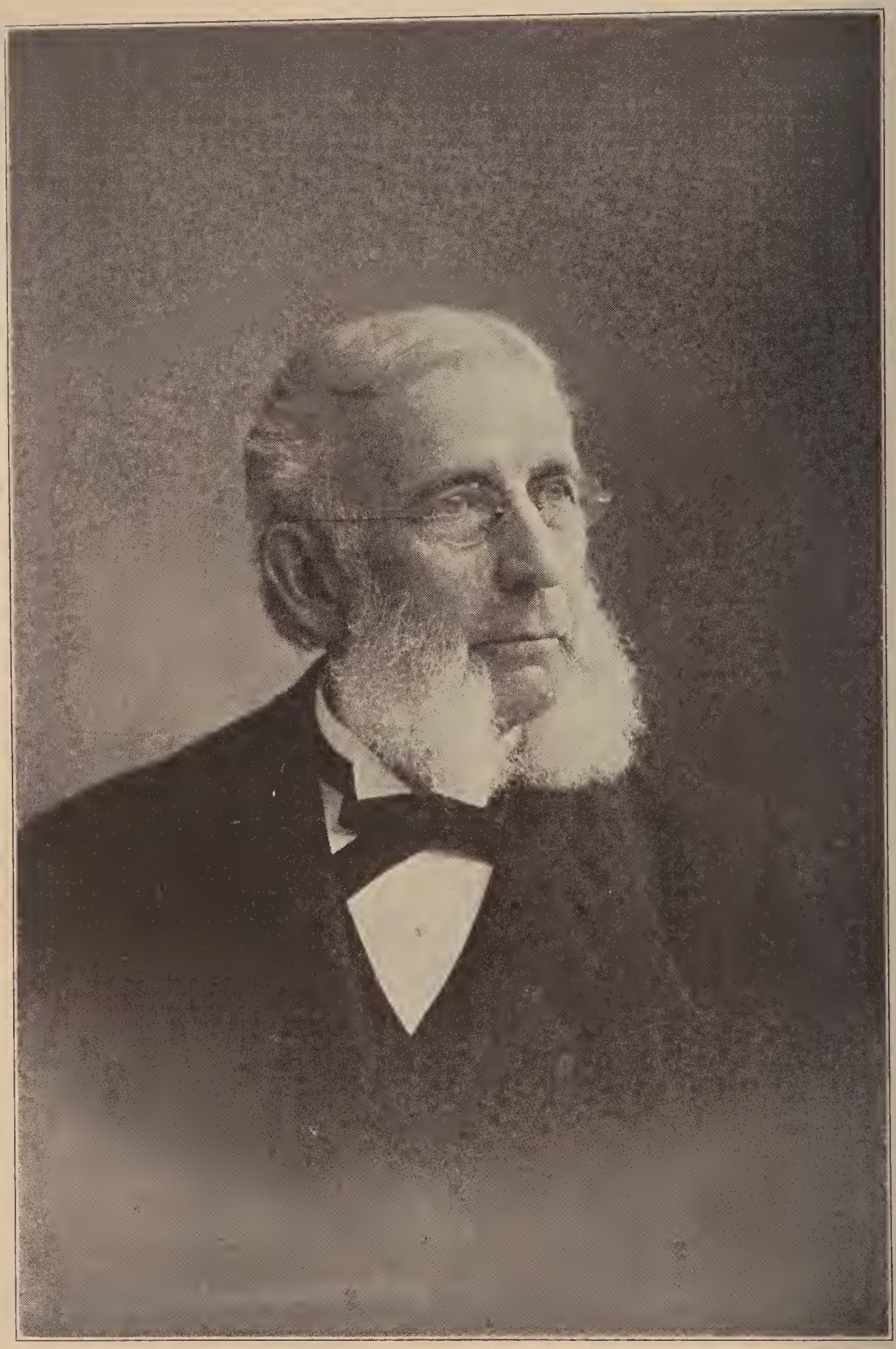

Silas M. Durand

Clarice E. Durand.

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Autobiography and
Later Writings

BY

SILAS H. DURAND

Philadelphia
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PREFACE

This book is one which Father himself was planning to publish in response to the urgent request of many of his friends. It was to supplement his book "Meditations." But owing to the conditions of the war the idea of publication was abandoned for the time. Now, after his death, we publish it in the hope that it will be a comfort to many who knew him and loved him. It consists of his autobiography followed by selections from articles published in the "Signs of the Times" since 1897.

In the autobiography as Father left it, there is no mention of his visits to Winnipeg, Canada. The first time he was there was in 1898 in response to an urgent invitation from his friend, Mr. Ebenezer McColl. Finding that he entirely escaped the annual attack of hay fever from which he suffered, he repeated his visit in 1900. Mr. McColl and his wife were the only Old School Baptists in the city at that time and Father's visits were a source of great enjoyment and comfort to them and their family.

After Mother's death in 1912, he visited Winnipeg again, and thereafter each year as long as his strength permitted. In 1917 and 1918 he deemed the journey too arduous, even for the relief he derived from his malady while there. During each of these later visits regular meetings were held at the home of his son-in-law, Gilbert B. McColl, there being by this time quite a number of members and friends of the Baptists in the city. Before his last visit a church there was organized.

During the year after he wrote the last of the autobiography, his heart was very weak. His doctor watched him carefully. Often when Father was starting to keep an appointment the doctor would say, "Mr. Durand, you ought not to go," but he would just smile and go on. He continued keeping his appointments here and elsewhere, though some one always accompanied him on his trips. He often walked a mile or two to see some one who was ill. During all this year his character shone more and more beautifully, as the path of the just "which shineth more and more unto the perfect day."

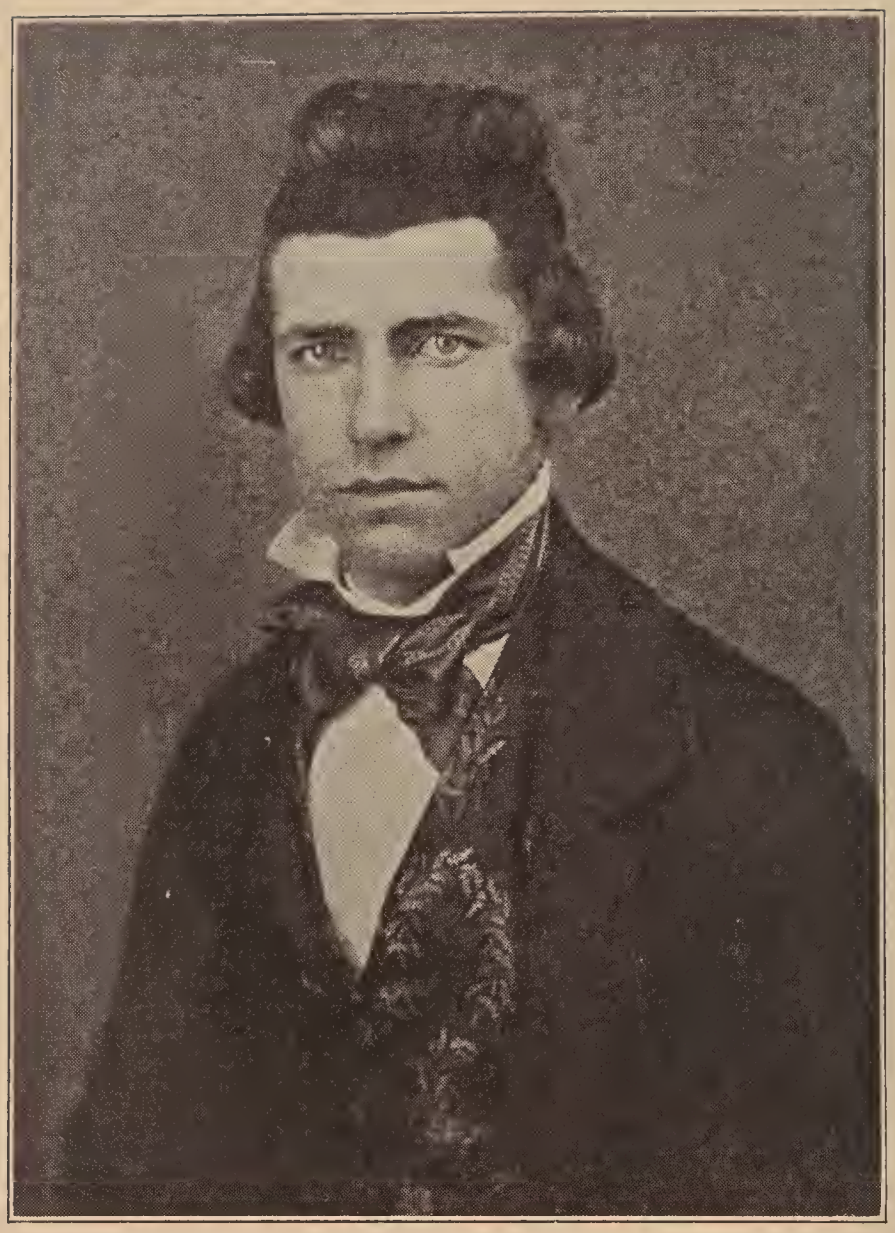
In 1918 he missed the June meeting in Ekfrid, Canada, for the first time in fifty years. In Salisbury, Maryland, on June 30, 1918, he performed his last ordinance of baptism. It was a solemn time. To all who stood by the water it seemed a miracle how the strength was given him.

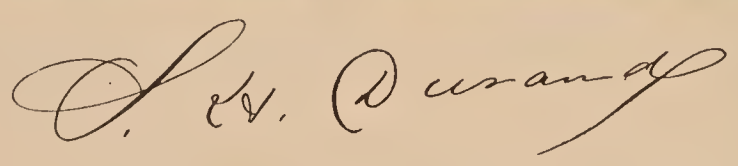
His last public speaking was at the funeral of a dear young friend on November 1st. He spoke from the words "For if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the Heavens." On the following Thursday a few friends were gathered together in the little covenant meeting that was always held by this church the first Thursday in each

month. This meeting will always be a precious memory to those who were there. His last prayer was as if he were almost face to face with the Lord whom he addressed.

That night he had the fall, from the shock of which, in his weak condition, he did not recover. During those days his talk was all upon the theme which was the nearest to him all his life. He was repeating scriptures and expounding them. He talked with his brethren of Jesus as the only way of salvation. He kept dwelling on that. "You *must* see," he would say, "the necessity for the blood of Jesus. There is no other way." He seemed to feel himself surrounded by the church of the First Born and an innumerable company of angels. Many a time he had said that Death, though it was the king of terrors, when it came, would be but as the drawing aside of a curtain which hides from us the entrance into Life. And so it seemed to be with him as he passed quietly from us on the morning of Tuesday, November 12th. There are no words to express what it means to have such lives to look back upon as those of our Father and Mother—lives spent in the service of the Lord. It is a priceless heritage.

EDITH DURAND MCCOLL,
MILDRED DURAND GORDY.





From Daguerreotype taken at the age of 21

Chapter I

MY EARLY LIFE

I think one of the hardest things I ever had to do was (or is) to get the consent of my own mind to write and publish this book. There is a constant desire to stay back out of sight. That I cannot now do, for I have written of my daily life and experience concerning spiritual things and published it among the brethren for more than forty years. Yet how little of my outward history and of my inner life I have told. How little can be told. Considering that, and also considering my natural backwardness from early childhood, the most diffident child I ever saw, I just now felt like giving up the task of writing any more, when the thought of the wonderful goodness and mercy of the Lord to me filled my soul with a desire to tell it to all that fear the Lord. I cannot recite it all; I cannot tell it. To give even a glimpse of it I must tell of all my vileness, my wickedness, my transgression in heart and lip and life, and that I cannot do. I can tell of times when the revelation of his grace and goodness to me, in an experience of his delivering power, has caused my soul to cry out and shout because of the greatness of the Holy One of Israel in the midst of Zion, and to say, "O Lord, I will praise thee: though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me." But I cannot tell of the awful depths of sin and the terrible waters of affliction out of which he has saved me. I can only say that my praise is continually due to the Lord for this great mercy that has kept me a place in the fellowship of his church and people.

I was born January 5, 1833, the eleventh of fourteen children. My father, Daniel Durand, was born November 7, 1793, in Middletown, Orange County, New York, when there were only two houses there. The ancestor of the Durand family in America was Dr. John Durand, who came from Rochell, France, during the time of the Huguenot persecution in 1685, and settled in Milford, Conn. My father saw the house where he lived.

My mother was born in Bellvale, Orange County, New York. She was a granddaughter of Elder James Benedict, who was said to be the first Baptist preacher who was ever west of the Hudson River. He organized the church at Warwick, and built the meeting house which is still standing in the center of the beautiful village of Warwick, and in which the church meets every Sunday.

My father and mother were married in April, 1815, in Bellvale, and lived there perhaps two years. They moved to Minnisink, where he worked at his trade, making wagons, for a few years. They both were baptized by Elder Ball in the fellowship of the church at Brookfield, of which there was a branch at Minnisink. At one time there was a membership of over 300.

In 1824 my father and mother, with four children, moved to Bradford County, Pennsylvania, 160 miles. One child had died. Whatever worldly goods they possessed were carried in a two-horse wagon. They lived two years at Camptown, where he attended a "grist mill." He went to the different churches within reach, but could find none to suit him. After some time he heard of a meeting nine miles distant by direct line through the woods, where a peculiar man preached in a school house. He went on a Sunday morning by "marked trees" through the woods to that place, which was called South Hill, and found the people whom he was seeking. Elder Hezekiah West was preaching for them. His name occurs often in the early volumes of the "Signs," and reference to his articles published there will show what a profitable and reliable gift he was to the church. At the next meeting day father and mother drove to the meeting, having to go a distance of twenty miles. They put in their letters there, where they remained until that church became extinct, about 1845, when they united with the Asylum Church at Vaughan Hill.

In December, 1828, they moved four miles into the woods, in the direction of South Hill, and went into a very substantial loghouse which father had built. It was yet without doors or windows, but not long before they were supplied. A heavy forest of hemlock, beech and maple was all around them, but the winter was mild, the cow and pigs could get their living in the woods, and a comfortable winter was passed. There seven children were born, making fourteen, ten of whom grew to manhood and womanhood. There the usual trials of frontier life were experienced, and there many comforts, both spiritual and natural, were enjoyed. There hard and faithful work was done, and such hardships endured as can only be known by those who have begun in the woods with nothing but good health, strong arms and invincible determination. There an irreproachable character was maintained by parents and children. Father worked at his trade, and cleared up the farm, and his reputation for absolute honesty was so noted as to be peculiar. As far as he was known that absolute honesty was known, and the only word of disparagement ever uttered concerning him was on account of his peculiar religion. Even this, however, we noticed with wonder, rather added to the respect and confidence which even those who opposed his religious views had for him, for they, in time of great personal straits and danger, would call upon him for advice and prayer. One of the members of a distant branch of our family, who has traced the genealogy back to Dr. John Durand, the Huguenot emigrant, says, "As far as I can learn, the name has never fallen into disrepute; always like the forefather (the Huguenot), reputable people and worthy of preserving the name and lineage for coming generations."

And it is right to prize that inheritance of a good character and reputation, and to be thankful for a father and mother whose lives were an example and an inspiration. And yet, when one is brought to

the bar of divine justice, how little all the best reputations among men avail. Then the best of men sinks into the depths and shrinks to nothing in the light of God, and is forced to cry out unto him, "Behold, I am vile; I abhor myself." Surely every man in his best state is altogether vanity.

The first religious meeting in the township of Herrick was held in that loghouse, our home, and I have heard that all the people in the township were present except an old man and a child, twenty-nine in number. Elder Hezekiah West was the preacher. He is the first preacher I remember. He was quite often at our house, living only five miles away, and always, when he came, preached a fireside sermon, on which occasions all the children were present and seated orderly, and sometimes neighbors would be present. Once, when I was probably six years old, he said, "Now I will preach a sermon for the children, and will preach just an hour." He repeated the text, "And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." The old loud-sounding clock had struck just before he began. And as he closed it began to strike again. I do not remember anything he said, but I well remember the text, and that I liked to hear him talk. How glad I would be to have the privilege of hearing that dear old elder preach from that text now, and tell of Jesus as the one street in all that great city, the one glorious way of salvation for all that great company which no man can number, and of that faith which is more precious than the finest gold, by which alone Jesus is seen.

I worked on the farm in the summer and attended school in the winter. My father hired the first teachers, and built a schoolhouse. At the age of 16 I attended an academy seven miles from home one fall term, and the following fall taught a school two and a half months. When 18 I went to the Whitestown Seminary one term and taught a school four months near there. The next fall I went to the Wyoming Seminary one term in the fall and taught during the winter, and attended the spring term. In October, 1853, I went to New Orleans, where my brother James then was, and where he and others of my brothers had been for many years. I taught as principal of an academy there for seven months. Returning home the following July, I taught school in Wayne County, Pennsylvania, for about a year, and in the fall of 1856 went again to New Orleans, where my brothers James and Warren then were, and where I engaged in bookkeeping. I returned again in the summer of 1857 to our home, and taught school about ten miles from home. In the spring of 1858 I visited New York City for the first time, trying to find a situation that would suit me. While there I heard Elder Goble preach several times, little thinking then that I would ever be a member of that church, much less a preacher. After a few weeks, I went to Middletown, N. Y., and stopped with a cousin, Judson Horton, who was merchant, postmaster and railroad agent at Howells, where I helped him for a few weeks, and frequently heard Elder Gilbert Beebe preach. I returned home,

and in October went to Wilkes-Barre, Pa., and entered the office of Hon. Hendrick B. Wright, as a student of law, and taught a school in that town during that winter. In 1860 I was admitted to the practice of the law.

During the last part of the time I was studying law I taught an academy four months with my youngest sister Rosina. That ended my teaching, and I felt that now I had found the occupation which suited me and which I would follow all my life. I entered upon the work with a determination to reach the highest place in my profession. I worked four years with fair success, seeking during those first years to prepare myself for the best work rather than to engage in what would bring me money the soonest.

BIRTHPLACE OF SILAS H. DURAND, HERICK, PA.

CHURCH WHERE SILAS H. DURAND WAS ORDAINED, HERICK, PA.

Chapter II

MY EARLY EXPERIENCE

I will insert here a letter that I wrote to Elder Gilbert Beebe just after my baptism, which tells the spiritual exercises which brought me to the church.

Herrick, Pa., June, 1864.

To Elder Gilbert Beebe:

Dear Brother: In the sweet peace and joy that are mine now it seems as though I can hardly take the time to write. I am continually looking back to consider the wonderful way in which I have been led from darkness to light. It is a way which I cannot yet fully understand, but what I do see of the Lord's marvelous dealings with me would require volumes, if I could write them. In the last few days I have learned more, and more peace and happiness have been mine than in all my life before. I have dwelt in a place of broad rivers and streams. I have been kept in almost perfect peace, and have been made to drink of the river of God's pleasures. There seems to have been a kind of light thrown back from this present, which has shown me much in my past life as I never saw it before; and I must note down some of these memories while my mind is dwelling upon them.

I remember that in my childhood my mind was often engaged in thinking of the immensity of space, and of what was before time began. Once I particularly remember, after an absorbing effort to reach with my imagination the boundary of space and the beginning of duration, lasting I do not know how long, I started back with a gasp as for breath, from the awful verge which my thoughts had reached, with a clear sense of an infinity beyond the utmost reach and comprehension of my mind. I think that one baffled effort, and the awful sense of infinity I then had, has followed me to the present.

At the age of twelve years I had read the Bible through twice; but I could not think my reading of it was from a love of it as the Word of God, though much of it was very interesting to me. I think, with ambition, which seemed to me to be my principal motive, there was some feeling. Very early I began to study the distinguishing doctrines of grace, and especially the doctrine of election, not only in the Bible, but by reading whatever I could find on the subject. My principal object seemed to me to be able to argue with Arminians; and I never could comfort myself with the thought that I loved or understood the doctrine in any other way than intellectually, and because my parents believed it. Indeed I sometimes thought I was more an Arminian at heart than those I would argue with, and that I had far less ground for hope than they. Although I knew the doctrine was true, I had many troublesome thoughts about it, and sometimes my mind would rise up against it in spite of myself.

In childhood I was very fearful. Thunder and lightning were a terror to me. I was afraid to be alone in the dark. This fear left me, I cannot tell when or how. There was one period when I had a great apprehension of dying. How long it lasted I cannot remember. I have never before looked at those exercises of mind as I do now. I recall one instance, out of many similar, when I feared to go to bed, lest I should surely die before morning. I took the Testament and went out, wishing it were morning. I think I felt that the Lord was angry with me; what other particular reason I had for that fear I cannot recall. It was terrible, a feeling of great blankness in the future, an indefinable dread of something from which there was no help.

I cannot now remember any time after the age of about ten years when I suffered so acutely from a fear of dying. But there was often that great blankness in the future, and an indescribable melancholy without a recognized cause, when I would feel like one of those dark November days, a dull leaden cloud over all the sky, and a dreariness over all the earth. It was not the absence of any particular enjoyment that I could name, but the impossibility of anything I could enjoy or delight in. My mood was not always so dark. I have had much cheerfulness in my life, and some hours of peace and joy, but my cheerfulness seems to have been circumscribed by this leaden cloud. My social and intellectual enjoyments were often keen, but the ultimate of all was this gloom. Those joys were not satisfying; they did not reach far enough. When I was at home, happiness seemed waiting for me somewhere else, and when away I wanted to get home again. And so I have wandered much, always busy, trying to do what I thought my duty, but finding no true rest or abiding joy. Thanks be to the dear Saviour, this cloud of gloom has gone, and I have found rest in his blessed name. How and why is a wonder to me. This new enjoyment I contemplate with increasing delight. It is perfectly satisfying. There seems no end to it, and no possibility of satiety.

I now go back to my childhood. I cannot remember when I first saw myself a sinner, but it was very early. I had an inner consciousness that a more vain, selfish, deceitful boy never lived. Even in particular instances, when I knew that I appeared to be better than others, I felt that I was worse. I never used profane language, nor did any one at our home, and there was a solemnity about sacred things there which gave us all a kind of reverence for them. But I could not feel that I was any better on that account. The same words or actions which appeared good in others, in me appeared to spring from motives which made them bad. When my conscience prevented me from doing or saying any particular wrong to which I was tempted, I felt about as guilty at seeing the capability of doing it in my heart as though I had done it. How I envied others who, I thought, never could think such wickedness, but who were honest enough to act out whatever they thought, and whose worst actions were good in comparison with my thoughts.

The oppression of this feeling of wickedness has at times been very great. The consciousness of the utter depravity of my nature has followed me all my life, but I think there was a peculiar and aching sense of guilt in my childhood which did not follow me, though when it left me I cannot tell. Heretofore I have regarded it as one of those things that pass away with childhood. I have always felt that I must get better in order to obtain the favor of God, no matter how much I was convinced that it was impossible for one to do so. I have made many resolutions to think and act according to the strictest rules of right, but have failed to keep them. My utter inability to change myself seems to have been forced upon me, item by item, slowly but surely. After the performance of an action in which it has seemed I might take most pride, and which others would approve, windows have been opened into the depths of my soul, and motives shown to me which have dissipated my pride in a moment. There have been times when my whole past life has risen up before me, a continuous train of evil, without one good thought or action to relieve the dreary monotony. I think that of late I have ceased to regard with any real complacency anything I might do, however laudable it might appear. I have always thought much of the fleeting nature of earthly things, and have realized very clearly the certainty of death, and the vanity of all pleasures that belong only to earth.

These thoughts have, I know, controlled my ambition and my desire for earthly fame, and have mitigated the bitterness of regret for the loss of earthly hopes. I have been conscious of a kind of satisfaction when suffering the keenest stings of humbled pride, as though it were well deserved and appropriate. It has seemed to me that earthly sorrow and misfortune were necessary in order to prepare me to receive and enjoy true happiness.

I have thought much about heaven, but could never feel that I could be happy with the holy beings who must inhabit that world of glory unless I was greatly changed myself. I think I have most earnestly desired and longed for that change, whatever it might be, and have had some hope that it might be given me, or that it might be mine at death. I have not thought much about hell, especially since my early youth, but the thought of banishment from the glory of his power has made me tremble. I cannot say that I have prayed, but I have tried to pray that the Lord would forgive my sins.

Thank God, the change has come in this life, but how different from what I looked for. My nature is not changed, nor my natural propensities eradicated, but it seems that a new love, and new desires have been given me, which are separate and diverse from all others. I am still conscious of being unfit by nature for the society of holy beings, but I long for it. I am happy with the saints here, and I know I shall be happy with them in heaven, if such should be my happy lot. What a happiness, to be blessed with the fulness of love, to be forever with the Lord, and to be free from everything unholy.

It is impossible to give more than a hint at the various exercises of mind and conflicts which I had as I went on thinking of these things day after day, trying to think of some way in which I could bring the doctrine of grace to apply to my own case and condition. I think that I have seen "men as trees walking," since I was about ten years of age.

When about the age of 20 I joined awhile in Methodist prayer meetings with the students at the seminary where I was attending. I was told that I ought to join the church, but this I could not do. They urged me to get religion, but I did not know how. The good works by which they told me I could get it I thought would be very evil works in me. About this time my sister Bessie joined the Old School Baptist Church at Vaughan Hill. I was very glad. I had always loved to hear the old Baptists preach, and did so whenever I could. For six years I have lived where there are none since I have been engaged in practicing law. In April, 1863, I united with the Presbyterian Church in Wilkes-Barre, where I live. I can hardly tell why I did so. I thought if I made a public profession of my desire to be a Christian it might help me. The preacher was one who had advocated sound doctrine, but he soon showed he could also advocate error and I became tired of that. I was called upon to speak in prayer in public. That I could not continue to do,—I, who had seldom lifted my voice above a whisper when alone, and that only in broken exclamations for help. It was too much. My sufferings in many ways cannot be told. There were times when I seemed to be on the border of despair. One severe trial was when I visited my father's home; he said to me, "You have professed to be a follower of Jesus. Do you feel like speaking in prayer?"

I sometimes felt that I had been left to my own evil heart in uniting with that church, both to break down my pride, and to show me more decidedly that I was helpless and worthless, and to have all shadow of doubt removed as to where the true church of God on earth was. It was not long before I saw clearly where it was not. I looked in vain for brotherly love, for union and fellowship among the members, and for all that should characterize those who are members of a gospel church, as I saw it in the New Testament. But I felt that they were all better than I, although my standing in the community, and in the church was good. They could talk of temporal things, but seemed to have no inclination to speak of spiritual things, which I was more interested in. The preaching, which I had thought sound in doctrine, seemed to grow less and less so, until I could not listen to it with any satisfaction.

At last I became very hungry to hear true preaching of the gospel. Last summer Elder Gilbert Beebe came to my father's house to preach the funeral sermon of my oldest brother, who had been killed in Missouri in the war. Many things he said tended to comfort me some, and to strengthen my hope that I might sometime be a subject of grace. During the past winter there were heavy troubles at home on account

of sickness. I was there much of the time and think I felt some trust in the Lord for myself and others, which he only can give. I talked some, especially with my sister Bessie, but could not feel as I wanted to. My brother Warren, who was not expected to live, experienced a bright hope, and I could rejoice with him. In March I was in Washington with my brother James, and while there I met Elder Wm. J. Purington, and talked very freely with him. I told him I had not taken communion with the Presbyterian Church in some time. He afterward, in a letter, advised me not to do so any more, but to take the first opportunity to talk with some gospel church, intimating that he hoped I had been exercised by the Spirit. I felt certain he was deceived in me, and it seemed that I ought not to talk any more with Christians in regard to my own case, for my troubled state of mind, and what I knew and felt of the truth led them to have a hope for me for which there was no foundation.

For months the Bible and old volumes of the "Signs of the Times" were my only reading, except what was necessary in my business. I could see things in each which seemed to express my feelings, but still my soul refused to be comforted. One evening, as I lay listening to a friend who was reading in the Psalms, I felt a peace and rest so unusual that I noticed it, but did not think of taking any hope on account of it. The next morning, as I walked to my office, thinking of these things, as I was most of my time, I thought of that peaceful state of mind that I had the last evening, and wondering what it meant. I asked myself: "Will I ever know anything?" Then the words were in my mind, "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness." They were very familiar to me; yet now they appeared new and full of life. I had always thought one must be good before he could hunger and thirst after righteousness. Now I saw that a man hungers after something he does not have. I have no righteousness; I want it; I long for it; I am the hungry man. Perhaps I am one for whom Christ died. All this was instantaneous, and the last sentence seemed to stop and be repeated with a certainty as though the word "perhaps" did not belong there. In an instant I was so glad I did not know what to do. I was truly glad, for the first time in all my life I said to myself perhaps I *am* one for whom Jesus died, though I had thought perhaps I *might* be. But now the word was *am*. And for the first time I was glad with that kind of gladness. Every gladness I had ever had from childhood had with it the suggestion of an end. It would end some time. But this I felt would never end. In two or three hours it was, or seemed to be, gone, in a way I shall soon tell; yet that same gladness reaches back to this time, and I have a remembrance and a taste of it now as I write.

I seem to have stopped walking, and to have been standing for some time, looking away into infinite distance, but I do not know how long I was there. "Thou hast put gladness in my heart." I went into my office and began writing to sister Bessie, to tell her of my gladness.

When my pastor came in, as he and other preachers occasionally did, I said at once: "Why, Doctor Hodge, for the first time in all my life I have a hope," and I went on to tell him the wonderful gladness which had been given me. I had been a member of his church about a year, and we had been quite intimate. When I had told him how I felt, he said, "I am glad for you. That is a very happy state of mind; and now all you have to do is to go on in the line of your duty and all will be well."

Immediately I began to question: My duty; my duty! I have never done my duty. I have never done one thing to merit this hope. It cannot be that I have a hope. This does not belong to me. I tried to keep it, but it began to slip away. In the course of two or three hours it seemed to be gone. My letter to my sister could not tell of the gladness that had come like sunshine into my heart, but into that, and into my own thoughts the questioning and heart searching went. I had always felt that before I could have a true hope, I must have a view of God, and of my condemnation under his holy law, and of Christ's sacrifice, in some way different from what I had ever had, and that I must come to him with a singleness of desire, and with a knowledge of what I wanted, and with a hungering and thirsting after righteousness. I could see nothing in my experience equal to what I thought this must be. If I had ever truly hungered, and had truly felt my condemnation, I certainly should be able to avoid all sin, and to pray with a single desire; whereas it sometimes appeared as though I saw more evil within me when trying to pray than at other times. I thought that perhaps my great desire for a hope and for the favor of God were the cause of my taking these things to myself, which did not belong to me.

I decided to go to the Warwick Association in Warwick, N. Y., and have a talk with Elder Trott, whose writings I had read in the "Signs," with great appreciation. Although certain that I had no true experience, I wanted to talk with some church. I knew that Christ was able to save even me, if I would go to him; but I could not tell how to go, or where to find him. Yet it seemed to me if I could hear the preaching I loved, and see the enjoyment of Christians, I would feel better, and if they would give me some corner in the church, that I would rest, and just trust myself to the Lord. Then again I thought it would be the worst thing I had ever done if I should say anything that would make them willing to admit me.

A friend at the Association expressed, as my sister had done before, a confidence in the reality of my experience. I could not feel that it was so, yet I felt somewhat enlivened. On the second day of the Association a lady came from a distance, who had never heard an Old Baptist preach. She was seeking the church of God, and felt that she had found it in the people at Warwick. She was baptized on the last day, and I thought it the most beautiful scene I had ever witnessed, but felt more alone than ever. I listened eagerly to all the preaching, but none of it came to me as my own, or with power, except one text:

"Thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." I had opportunity to talk with several, and among them Elder Trott, whom I regarded with almost reverence on account of what I had read of his writings. He advised me to tell the church my feelings and exercises, and let them judge of my experience. "You know," he said, "they are the judges." I saw that most of them had a hope for me, but I felt as though I had deceived them. Although I had decided to act upon the advice of Elders Trott and Beebe, and receive the ordinance of baptism if the church accepted me, I was really distressed at what I was going to do, and resolved to explain this feeling to the church, and charge them to judge with great care. And yet, I thought, suppose they should say this is an experience of grace; what would I do! So in this great trouble and conflict of mind, with many other perplexities and anxieties of soul weighing upon me, I sank into sleep.

On Saturday morning about three o'clock I was awake and thinking of these things as usual. One by one my doubts and perplexities came before my mind and were removed. Passages of scripture and points of doctrine with which I was familiar had new meanings for me. I seemed to be thinking with wonderful ease, and with a certainty as to the correctness of my thoughts which was new to me. What was explained to me in that hour it would take long to tell. Suddenly I was conscious that I had been lying in perfect peace and rest. I was thinking so easily, and saw things so clearly that I thought I would take up the things that had troubled me so much and think them over. I looked about me for them, but they were all gone beyond my reach. I seemed to see them in the distance around me, as Christian in "The Pilgrim's Progress," after he had passed through the Valley of the Shadow of Death, saw the evil things that had tormented him, but they were far off, and came not nigh. Not a trouble was in sight. I saw no reason for the peace and calm which possessed my mind, but there it was, and I knew it was the "Peace of God, which passeth all understanding." How good and sweet it was, after all these weary, restless years. How my glad heart went out in love and gratitude to the dear Lord. I thought of the words of scripture, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is staid on thee, because he trusteth in thee." I had tried so long, so many weary years, to stay my heart on God, that I might have that perfect peace, but had never been able. Now, without an effort of my own, and in an unexpected moment, and in an unexpected way, the Lord had done it. I had done nothing to merit it; I was no better than I was yesterday. It was so wonderful; I could see no reason in myself for it. It passed my understanding.

I thought,"Can I ever sin again, in heart or word or act?" It seemed impossible. Can I ever tell any one how to get this peace, or that he himself can obtain it, when it had come to me as the wind, blowing where it listeth? For I knew then that nothing I had ever done, nor

any sermon I had ever heard, nor anything that anybody had ever said to me, had been the means by which that peace had come to me. All that day I was like them that dream. Peace flowed in my heart like a river. My mouth was filled with laughter, and my tongue with singing. I could not yet understand what reason I had for feeling so, and occasionally a momentary trouble would come over me because I did not have my doubts and afflictions any more. But even that could not hurt me. I was led and controlled by a blessed spirit of peace.

On Sunday morning I awoke about the same hour, three o'clock, and found myself still with him, my restfulness and delight still greater. I never can express the trembling joy that overflowed my soul as the assurance grew stronger and stronger that I had found my Saviour, or had been found of him.

On that morning, Sunday morning, June 12, 1864, Elder Harding preached in Wallkill Meeting House, near Middletown, N. Y., from Isa. 55:13, telling much that was delightful for me to hear. I told the church a little of my feelings and was received. Instead of having to tell them of doubts I could tell them of a precious hope, but seemed able to tell them only a little. There was no hurry or excitement about me that day. In the afternoon I was baptized by Elder Gilbert Beebe in a little lake in the cemetery at Middletown. I had often thought that if such a thing should ever be, it would be a very exciting time for me, but I was never so calm before. The crowd that stood quietly by, and even the beautiful address to which we listened, claimed my attention less than the beautiful clouds, and a little sunfish playing in the water at my feet. The sermon of Elder St. John, from Luke 18:29, 30, and the address of Elder Beebe in giving me the right hand of fellowship, were listened to with more pleasure than can be expressed. My delight at getting into the church knew no bounds.

Preaching was a new thing to me. I found that after all my fancied knowledge of true doctrine, I was a perfect child in my ignorance of spiritual things. I first knew really what prayer was; it was breathing within me. I first knew what faith was; I stopped looking away somewhere for the Lord, and trying to form an adequate conception of him in my mind; and acknowledged his glorious presence, and saw by faith my precious and glorious Redeemer. I have only once seemed to see a vision, and that was hardly with my mind. On Monday morning the moment I woke a doubt seemed to arise within me. It had the appearance of a terrible black thing rising out of darkness. I shrank back and cried in my soul, "O Lord, I cannot contend with this." Instantly I saw the appearance of a hand reach out over it and crush it back into darkness again. The black thing appears to me to be composed of all doubts and questionings that can ever rise up in the mind against the truth, and even against the experience of grace, and the existence of God. I was not left to try my strength with it; and I felt that moment that I would never have that peculiar temptation again. I feel so yet.

It was a privilege for which I was, and am, very thankful, to spend those few days with those who have been taught of God. On Monday I left them, but peace went with me. My joy and wonder continually increased, as new things were revealed, and glorious things were unfolded to my spiritual understanding, every revelation renewing and strengthening my assurance that I had found my Beloved. I could not bear to have my thoughts diverted from my new-found treasure, but kept it closely grasped by them, as though afraid it might suddenly vanish, as though, indeed, it could not be a reality, but only a dream.

And so I have gone on till now. Today I have felt as though I ought to write some of my former exercises, lest in this new life I might forget them. I have done so hastily and meagerly. But I cannot keep long from the contemplation of this new joy, and from the new beauties I see in the Bible, and from talking with my home folks here at my father's, who are now dear to me in a new sense. In a few days I must return to my place of business, where I shall be alone, but for the presence of him who I know will be with me, and who I trust will hide me in the secret of his presence from the pride of men. Though far from those with whom I have a name and an inheritance, still may I trust that the Lord will abundantly satisfy me with the provisions of his house. Let me always ascribe praise to him who sitteth on the throne of his holiness, and whose mercy endureth forever.

WILKES-BARRE, PA., July 26, 1864.

DEAR BROTHER BEEBE: As I look over this it appears to me as though but little has been told, and that in a very inadequate manner. I have not succeeded in telling what I want to, and sometimes I feel as though my experience amounts to but little anyway in comparison with that of others; except the last part, in which I think I cannot be mistaken.

I have been back at my business about a month, a solitary but a very happy Old School Baptist. My peace and comfort have been almost unbroken, except by the continual evidences of my sinful heart. Even these, however, have been made to strengthen, rather than weaken my trust. When my evil disposition, which I almost thought the word of peace had put down forever, first manifested itself after I had received my hope in Jesus, I was startled, shocked, and for a while I feared and grieved very much. I said to myself, "I am a sinner yet! My hope is not good, and I can never have another, for this is the only way." In an instant the words came to me, "He is the end of the law for righteousness." And I was comforted. But oh, how humble I was before the Lord.

Thus my dear Saviour was near me to keep me from falling, teaching me that in his righteousness I had hope. My hope seems to have grappled a very solid rock, and all the troubles that can surge around me, and even the greatest of all sorrows on account of sin, however much they may toss me, do not seem able to shake or disturb the deep

gladness of my soul, any more than the winds can affect the depths of the ocean. My joy cannot be accounted for by any of the circumstances of my life. The earth did not give me that hope, and cannot take it away.

I have been led into the knowledge of the scriptures as much as is for my good. Sometimes when seeing so much in them which I cannot understand, I have prayed that they might be opened to me. But when light falls upon one passage of scripture, it almost dazzles me. What would I do if the whole scriptures were opened before me at once!

One evening, while reading in Hebrews, feeling lonely, and wishing for the companionship of some of the Lord's people, it was suddenly shown to me that I had come unto Mt. Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and for a time I felt that I was in the general assembly and church of the First Born, and could reach out my arms with equal love to all the redeemed, whether in heaven, or still on earth. It was a glorious joy. I cannot have much greater, I think, while in this world. It was the first time I had really felt what it is to be a fellow-citizen with the saints, to be one with the household of God, part here and part above, but all having one delight, one blessed work, singing praises to our dear Redeemer.

It is a delightful thing when we have had new experiences and new thoughts in regard to divine things, so incomprehensible, so wonderful, to our minds that we almost hesitate, and but tremblingly accept the joy they bring, lest they may be only our own dreamings, so slow are we to believe that the Spirit would show the things of Jesus to such as we; how surprisingly delightful to see or hear the same experiences and thoughts expressed by others whom we never saw or heard before, far more clearly than we could have expressed them.

May grace be with all those who love the Lord in sincerity, and may peace and joy and love with faith abound unto all the saints.

Your brother affectionately,

SILAS H. DURAND.

Copied by S. H. D., March 2, 1915.

How clearly every thought and feeling and word and incident comes before me now, after so many years. How much I felt I knew, and how little I knew. On Sunday morning of the day I was baptized, Elder Harding said while preaching, "A minister of the gospel may not only be left to doubt his call to preach, but his call by grace." At the dinner table where he and other ministers were, I called attention to this, and said to Elder Harding and the others, "Do you think it right for one who has such hope as we have to talk that way? I feel that I am done with trouble. The only trouble of any account is because of sin, and I am done with sin." Elder Beebe quietly remarked, "You will know more some time than you do now," and they all smiled, but I knew that I was done with sin. Oh, if I could only have seen along the terribly dark and crooked path I was to walk

in the years that were then before me, but now have gone by, how could I have lived! But they were right. I do know more now than I did then. It seems to me a wonder that I have been kept from outbreaking transgressions, and have retained the fellowship of the church.

During the few days at Middletown my mind was as one in a dream. I was talking or singing all the time. The scriptures were in my heart and in my mouth, but I do not know that I opened the Bible during the two or three days. On my way to my father's home I stayed all night at a friend's. When I lay down I saw a Bible on a stand and took it up, saying to myself, "Well, I will see what this says." I opened and began to read where it first opened: "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion we were like them that dream: then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing. Then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us, whereof we are glad."

"Why," I said to myself, "this is just what I have been feeling for three days, and here it is in the Bible." Then I knew the Bible as I had never known it before. From that time I had it whenever I could, and in six weeks I had read everything that was in it, not in order, but as I felt, first the Psalms, then the Gospels, then Isaiah, and so on. Once during that time I called upon two sisters, members of the same church I had before been with. One of them asked, "What are you reading now?" I hesitated a moment, then said, "To tell you the truth I am not reading anything but the Bible." "Oh, you are trying to be very good, now you have got to be a Baptist." "No," I said, "I am reading it because I prefer it to any other book." "Oh," she said, "I do not believe anybody would rather read that than a novel. Of course I read the Bible night and morning because it is my duty, but I would rather read a novel." "Why," the elder one said, "I like to read the Bible sometimes"; and even then I was hungry to get to reading the dear book again.

The subject of salvation by grace, and my wonderful experience of it, were uppermost in my mind nearly all the time, and I cared little to talk of anything else. It was all so new and so wonderful. And the scriptures were constantly showing me some new and wonderful thing. I had read a great deal in the Bible all my life, but now I was reading it with a new feeling, as being personally interested in what it contained. It was mine. The precious things it told about were for me. Sometimes it seemed as though some one was talking to me out of its pages. I kept on reading it as one would dig and work over the soil in his garden if he knew there were diamonds hidden all over it within six inches of the surface, or as a hungry man would watch for crumbs of bread that lay scattered about.

In the office, on the street or in the parlor, this was the one thing I cared to talk about. I remember of saying to a company of friends once, "You undoubtedly think it strange that I should bring forward this subject of religion here. I know it is not customary, and is deemed

out of place in a social company like this, but your preachers tell us it is the most important thing in the world, and now it is so to me. Compared with this subject of Jesus and his salvation, I cannot think of any other subject as of any special importance." How little I knew then of the possibility of such changes in my mind as I have since then experienced. But I am thankful for that sweet childhood season of joy and confidence in the dear Saviour.

I could find few in my town that seemed to fully understand and respond to my experience. There was one, an Episcopalian woman, to whom I could talk freely of what I had felt. But all were very kind and friendly, and many seemed to feel that I had met with a great change in my mind. I tried to find any throughout the surrounding country who understood how I felt, and was very glad when I found some I enjoyed visiting.

I went on in my business as a lawyer, but seemed to have little interest in it. I tried to do well what I had to do, but my Bible was at hand all the time, and open before me a good deal of the time. I also read in old volumes of the "Signs of the Times," which my father had sewed together, and also in the hymn book. I was often surprised to read my own thoughts and feelings in letters published years before, and also in the Bible. One night, alone in my office reading in the scriptures, I all at once realized, as I read, that Abraham had felt as I did then, and that I had the experience of Abraham. Those old patriarchs and holy men, it had always appeared to me, were far above where I could even hope to reach, and now I felt that I was sitting down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in gospel experience and rest. That unspeakably holy feeling I can never forget.

I expected to continue all my life in the practice of the law, and am not conscious of any thought that I would ever leave it. I do not remember that it ever occurred to me during those two months that I should ever have to preach. Yet the subject of preaching was much in my mind. A few days after my baptism I rode a short distance with Elder St. John, who was going to an appointment. I asked him if a preacher of the gospel now ever could feel as Paul did that he was sure he should come unto them in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. I do not remember that he answered. The Sunday night of the day I was received in the church, they had a conference meeting, and I remember with comfort now the joy I had in being there with the church, and the sweetness I felt in speaking to them of Isa. 26:1-4, and telling them that for years I had tried to trust in the Lord in order that I might feel that perfect peace, and I had never been able, and that now the Lord had given me that trust, and had staid my mind on him, and I was kept in perfect peace.

The next week was the meeting of the Chemung Association with the Asylum Church, to which my father and mother, two brothers and sister Bessie then belonged, and of which, a year after, eleven members of our family were members. At the close of that session of the asso-

ciation I was called upon to speak in conference. I felt a comfort in speaking to the dear brothers and sisters of what the Lord had done for me. I learned long afterward that Elder Conklin, a name never to be forgotten by those who knew him, said to my father, "Brother Durand, your son will have to preach." How little I then thought that such a thing could be. But the subject of preaching was much in my thoughts. As I drove an elder from our house to the meeting, I said, "Elder ———, how does a man feel who is called to preach?" His reply startled me. "Now don't be thinking of that. There's too many preachers now." Less than two years after that he left the Old Baptists.

July 30th I went to Middletown, about 150 miles. I had questions to ask Elder Beebe about many passages of scripture as we rode on Sunday morning to meeting at New Vernon. His answers were very satisfying. The last question was concerning the rest that remaineth to the people of God. Before he could answer that we were at the meeting house. To my surprise he took that for a text. I wondered because I thought a preacher must have his subject well thought out and arranged in his mind before he could venture to preach. His sermon seemed to me very clear, and I was lost to present things as I listened to the glorious truth of salvation, and saw how contrary to that truth were all the religious societies and systems with which I had so lately been connected. When he concluded his sermon he asked me if I had anything to say. My mind was full and I was instantly on my feet, telling how clearly I saw that the modern missionary system was contrary to the Lord's word, and that the Lord would in his own way, by his own power and grace bring all his chosen ones to himself. In a short time I came to myself, and hurriedly and in a good deal of consternation and confusion of mind sat down. It seemed to me I had brought a reproach upon the sacred cause I so much loved. Riding home with Deacon Hiram Horton, who was one of the best and most spiritual of men, I tried to find out whether he thought it was wrong for me to have spoken. His reply was to remind me of what I had said to him seven years before of Elder Beebe's preaching, that it was like apples of gold in pictures of silver. I concluded he thought I had disgraced the church by speaking. It was some days before I was relieved of that painful burden. In the afternoon Elder Beebe called on me again, but I had resolved not to speak any more.

My peace and comfort continued from the day before I was baptized unbroken for three or four weeks. The sins which had so long weighted me down were gone, and I looked for no more trouble of that kind. But one day in an instant I saw that I was a sinner yet. My nature all at once appeared to me most vile and hateful. My thought was in this form: "My hope is not good, for I am a sinner yet; and I can never have another hope, for there is no other way of salvation." My feeling was as though I was over a bottomless abyss, and about to fall.

Instantly the words were in my mind, "Jesus is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." Salvation was in that precious word. I was saved by it. But oh, how humble I was; how lowly, how self-loathing. What a wonderful change that short experience had worked in me. My self-confidence had received a terrible blow. I have since then had more terrible experiences of the awful power of sin, and longer continued before deliverance came, but none stands out in my memory more distinctly than that first conflict.

I called one evening on a former school friend, who was recovering from an illness. He was a most intellectual man, and a thorough scholar. He asked me to tell how I came out of the Presbyterian Church. In reply I told him much of my spiritual exercise of mind which had the effect of separating me from their doctrine and order and institutions, so that I had no difficulty in separating from them, still retaining their esteem. He listened with such interest, and made such responses that I thought he had the same experience I had. So I began to talk of the Bible, which was so dear to me. Soon he became restless, and finally said somewhat excitedly, "I believe in election as much as you do, but God elected those who he foresaw would be obedient." "But," I replied, "that would be according to their works foreseen. And Paul says: 'Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ before the world began.'" "It does not mean so," he replied. "If I thought it meant so I would not believe the Bible." I went away with my head down. I felt such sadness and wonder that I could not make him see what was so plain to me. I had not yet learned that I could not tell the Lord's secret to any one who had not learned it from him already. When Jesus healed any he said, "See, thou tell no man," but the more he charged them the more a great deal they published it. Yet not one of them has ever disobeyed that command, for while those who are healed desire to publish and tell abroad the good news, no one understands the blessed truth but those to whom the dear Saviour has himself told it. His sheep hear his voice and his alone.

At one time during the summer I had a great trial of mind concerning my right to be a member of the church of God. I felt so vile, so lacking in every grace, so unworthy of any favor from a holy God, I was tempted to believe I had deceived myself and the church. The next time I met Elder Beebe I took him aside and said, "Did you have fellowship for me when you baptized me?" "Why, my child," he said, "I should not have baptized you if I had not." I was greatly encouraged. I thought I was alone in that peculiar temptation. I did not then know that almost every one, if not all, who are called by grace have some such seasons of doubt concerning their experience.

Chapter III

EXERCISES ABOUT PREACHING

On the 14th of August I heard a man preach in the Presbyterian Church where my membership had been. The congregation was large. I wanted to get up and tell the people not to believe what he said, that if they knew the truth concerning that text it would comfort them. I thought if they felt as I had felt before my hope came he was distressing them greatly. I could hardly keep my seat. I went home with my head down. As I entered my room I spoke aloud, as though another had spoken in me, "I must preach." Then I was startled. I wanted to go to the ends of the earth to tell everybody that salvation was by grace, and that what that man preached was not true. But the word "preach" was too great a word for me.

Soon after that I wrote to Elder Beebe, telling him of that wonderful experience, and asking what it meant. In his reply he said the brethren had thought I had a work to do in the church, and were waiting till the Lord should let me know it, and that they had appointed a certain night, September 4th, for me to exercise my gift. Then I was afraid. It did not seem possible that I could preach; and I could not yet think it possible for me to leave my business. This caused me great anxiety and some distress of mind. I find in my diary of August 14th, the evening when I had first had the thought that I must preach, this sentence: "I am certain I must engage in another work than the law."

A few days after this, a large coal operator came to my office and asked me to take charge of the legal work connected with his business. I looked it over, and took time to think of it. All that day I worked hard and enjoyed the work. Much business was brought to me, and during the day I hardly thought of anything but the work. During the past winter I had done but little, having been much with my two brothers, one in Washington and one at my father's home, both very sick. Since my baptism I had not cared much for legal work, only to do my duty. And this was really the first day in many weeks that I had been devotedly engaged in work. All other things were put out of my mind, and the thought of preaching was gone, so far as I can remember. I had during all of my practice been preparing for the line of work which appeared now to be coming to me in such measure as to animate me much. I must, however, have remembered my thoughts about preaching, for I told the coal operator that possibly I might not stay there, and if I arranged to go away I would turn the business over to a friend, H. W. Palmer. He said that man would be his next choice.

That night I went into my room with very peculiar feelings. I had spent evening after evening there with the Bible, the hymn book and

the "Signs," in unspeakable comfort. Now, as I entered the room, I realized that something was lacking. I looked around and the room seemed empty. I took the Bible, but there was nothing for me. I was not at rest. I sat down but instantly rose again. Unrest! It was terrible, distressing. It seemed almost as though I were going to die. All at once I thought of the day just closed, and the work I had done, and the enjoyment of it. Then I said to myself; "On Sunday night you felt that you must go to the ends of the earth and tell the glad tidings of salvation by grace, and what have you been doing today?" Then I said, whether aloud or only in thought I cannot tell; "If I were sure of making fifty thousand dollars by the end of this year I could not and I would not stay." Oh, what a sweet peace and rest and a feeling of holy solemnity came into my soul. From that day to this, nearly forty-four years, there has been no going back in my mind from that decision. I have still had times when it seemed impossible for me to preach; one so unworthy, so poor in spirit, so ignorant. Qualification has seemed utterly lacking, but the thought of business and money has never since been a hindrance to me. It seemed the words were sweetly been a hindrance to me. It seemed the words were sweetly given to me given to me by the dear Saviour: "Your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." From that day to this my *needs* have been all supplied, and I am sure they will be to the end, but not all my *wants*.

One night about this time these words were in my mind all night: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." All night the meaning of them kept unfolding in my soul, and the inexpressible sweetness of them was tested in my spirit. Whether I slept I do not know. I did not need to sleep. I had a more satisfying rest than sleep could give. Not long after this I was at a conference meeting at Vaughan Hill, perhaps Sunday, August 28th. On that day my next older brother James was baptized by Elder Schoonover. My next younger brother Warren had been baptized in July, when I was not present. Both had been extremely ill during the past year, and both had received a hope, each in a most wonderful manner. At the conference referred to I spoke concerning the words of the dear Saviour which had been so blessed to me during one whole night. After this they seemed to pass away from my mind in a manner, though not by any means forgotten.

Now I began to think with trembling to try to prepare myself for the trial of my gift at Middletown at the meeting appointed for the evening of Sunday, September 4th. I thought if I could preach at all I could preach from those words: "Come unto me, etc." So I carefully laid them up in my mind for that occasion, occasionally thinking them over, and arranging my thoughts concerning them. The Sunday came and I was present at the Wallkill Meeting House in the morning. It rained and few were out. Elder Beebe said I must preach. I was in consternation. I had but one text and that was for the meeting

in Middletown at night. Elder Beebe and all the rest insisted that I must go forward. Just then I remembered the peculiar language of Isa. 29:11, 12 and 18 about the book which the learned could not read because it was sealed, and the one that was not learned because he was not learned, but the deaf shall hear the words of the book, etc. I spoke a little about that, and one of the deacons, an old man, said he was edified by what I said. I looked at him sadly for I thought he had said what was not true in order to encourage and comfort me. I knew it could not be that what I had said could have been of any benefit. But perhaps at night I might preach. Elder Beebe was called from the morning meeting to attend a funeral and told me I must preach at the afternoon meeting in Middletown. I urged and begged to be let off from that; said I could not do it. The thought of trying to preach in the afternoon was frightful, and especially as I had only the one text, and that I must use at night. When I found it was inevitable, I looked around in my mind and finally thought of the text used by the Presbyterian preacher the night I felt such a strong desire to contradict him, and when afterward I, for the first time, thought I must preach: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." But to use that I must speak upon the subject of the resurrection, and I knew that one prominent person would be present who had told me she did not believe in the resurrection of the body in the same way that some of us did and I feared I would offend her. My mind was in a tumult. However, the time came and I tried to tell what I thought of the text, and declared the resurrection of the body. Though I will say here that I did not then, and do not now, believe that the body, which is sown a natural body, is raised a natural body and then changed into a spiritual body; but "it is raised a spiritual body." Well, I got through the afternoon, and was spoken to very kindly by the one referred to, as well as by the rest of the friends. I did not, however, in my own mind, call it preaching. But if I could preach at all (which I began to doubt very much) I thought I could do it at night. My text I had kept laid away, and neither in the morning nor afternoon had I interfered with it.

At night there came together a large congregation, and I took my text. But what work I made. I talked, it is true, for near forty minutes, but I felt as though I had my hands full of dead, dry leaves, rattling them. There was no life or light or feeling, except a feeling of self-abasement, helplessness and distress. One followed me, the one I have already referred to, who afterward left us, and said some surface things in a smooth, cold manner, with no help or interest to me. I had tried to get down into the depth and sweetness of the text. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," and I could not. I felt that I had absolutely said nothing, and worse than nothing. The church gave me license to preach, but I am convinced they could not have seen any gift in what I said that night. If it had not been for the morning and afternoon meetings, and what they had heard before, they could not have thought I had a gift.

The night was a distressing one to me. I tossed sleeplessly till morning, writing bitter things against myself, feeling sure that I had made the church mourn on my account; that I had no gift, and that I ought never to have allowed them to have an appointment for me. How my soul cried unto the Lord for mercy, that he would direct me and uphold me in the right way. Toward morning I became somewhat quiet, and promised myself that if the Lord ever had anything for me to say I would try to say it if he would give me ability, but that I would never lay up a text again, nor try to arrange beforehand what I should say. I had been humiliated greatly and my pride had been broken down, and now I did feel humble. But I have not kept my promise. Many a time I have tried to arrange a sermon for a future occasion, and have as often been shut up, and three or four times during the first year I had to stop and sit down.

The next week I went in company with several brethren to the Lexington Association, and enjoyed the meetings and the preaching very much. I was called upon to speak, and felt very much at liberty in my soul. It seemed to me then that preaching the gospel was an easy and most delightful work, but I soon found that it was so only when the Lord filled my soul with the comfort of his love and gave me to feel at the time the power of his word. But when left to myself to depend upon the power of my own mind, preaching is the hardest work I ever did.

When my sister Bessie received a hope ten years before I was brought into the church, she received in her own mind an assurance that I would have to preach. When I wrote her that I had united with the Presbyterian Church, she was so deeply affected that for a time she almost lost her power to breathe. Soon, however, the remembrance of the power with which that assurance had come to her that I must preach quieted her, and she rested. I knew nothing of this until the church had liberated me to preach.

I still have times of soul searching, and of crying unto God as a little child, that he will lead me and guide me in the path of duty, and uphold me by His spirit, and I must acknowledge with humble gratitude and thanksgiving that the dear Lord has not been unmindful of my petitions. And I would love, if enabled by his grace, to recount some of his blessings, and tell of his goodness to me. I can say with the Apostle, "Having obtained help of the Lord, I continue unto this present, trying to preach as with the ability that God giveth, the unsearchable riches of Christ."

The terrible afflictions of soul I cannot describe. I cannot tell of the sorrows on account of sin in thought and word and deed, of the going down into the depths, when deep has called unto deep in my soul, when I have felt that "the bars of the earth were about me forever." But so far the Lord has showed me his delivering power and grace, and out of every one of these deep and heavy afflictions the Lord has brought me into some deeper and more glorious understanding of his goodness.

Chapter IV

ABOUT MY MASTER'S WORK

I was now having appointments made for me—it was quite a number of weeks I think before I could venture to make one for myself, which I did only by invitation. I attended the London Tract yearly meeting, and the Salisbury Association, and visited the church at the delightful old Woolford home at Church Creek, Md., and found preaching a stern necessity by the direction of the old ministers, without reference to my feelings in the matter.

But it still seemed strange, wonderful, impossible that I could be a preacher of the gospel. I, who had settled down to what I had esteemed my life work; that I could be taken away from my business so well established, and that had been so satisfying to me. I tried to know the will of the Lord concerning it, and to pray and beg that he would lead and guide me, and not let me run without being sent by him. And such wonder and such crying in my soul unto God concerning this important matter have continued at intervals to this day, nearly forty-four years, and made me to enter more fully into the blessed truth that salvation is of the Lord. I have learned that only through great tribulation can one enter into the kingdom of God. All spiritual knowledge is a revelation and never the result of study. We must be hungry for the word of the Lord before we find and eat it; we must feel our nakedness before we can know and value the garments of salvation; our weakness before the law makes us know Christ as our strength, and we must from day to day experience the dying of the Lord Jesus in our body in order that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

The ministering and other brethren were very kind and tender toward me in those days and weeks, and indeed they have been kind and tender all the way through. Elder Samuel Trott was the oldest one among those I met at that time. I may say something more about him and some others before I close these pages.

My ordination was appointed for December 7th and 8th. As my father and mother were unable to take the journey to Middletown, N. Y., about 200 miles, the church arranged to come to our home and have the ordination services there. We occupied a neighborhood meeting house, owned by the Presbyterian Church, where I had preached November 27th. I think that was the first time that my parents had heard me. The congregation was large, on the Wednesday and Thursday, December 7th and 8th. As I related my experience and my exercises about preaching, the questions of Elder Beebe, the moderator, led me over the whole ground of my life with the Presbyterian Church, and my reasons for being dissatisfied with their doctrine and order, so that I was kept talking about two hours. The church at Vaughan Hill,

seven miles from our home, and those who came from Middletown, with a number from other churches of the Chemung Association, formed the council; and the Presbytery was composed of Elders Gilbert Beebe, Hollister, Schoonover, St. John, Cox, and Smith. On Thursday Elder Beebe preached and incorporated a most solemn and impressive charge in his sermon. Elder St. John spoke in prayer, Elder Cox delivered the charge, and Elder Smith gave the right hand of fellowship. There were present of my own family father and mother, four brothers, two sisters and two sisters-in-law.

I had finished and closed up my legal business during November, and was now fully engaged in the work of preaching. I stayed at home the rest of the month, preaching on Sunday at Vaughan Hill, and a few times in the neighborhood of home. On the 7th of January, 1865, I was at the church meeting at Waverly, N. Y., with Elder St. John, the pastor. I was expected to preach on Sunday the 8th. As we rode to the meeting house I felt cold and no scripture was on my mind, but that did not disturb me, for I remembered a text which I had preached from at Middletown not long before with liberty, and I knew I could use that, and had no doubt of my ability to interest the people and do myself credit with that text. So I felt very confident and comfortable as we rode along, although I had no spiritual exercise of mind. When the time came I took my text and began to speak, but I found nothing to say, and in less than ten minutes I sat down confused and chagrined and ashamed. It was a terrible blow to my pride and all my doubts and fears revived. So soon had I forgotten my experience with a "saved-up" text at the time I was called upon to exercise before the church four months before, and my solemn resolution and promise made to myself at that time never again to save a text, or arrange beforehand what I should say. But I have forgotten many a time since then, and indeed I never have been able to learn how to improve in preaching, nor to depend on my memory.

On Wednesday and Thursday, January 11th and 12th, I came with Elder Beebe, by invitation, to attend a council called by the church at Southampton. There had been some trouble which I did not fully understand then, and never have fully understood since. By the advice of the council, Elder Harding resigned his pastoral care of the church, and took a letter. The church numbered, I think, about ninety at that time, and seemed a very desirable place for a preacher to live. There was quite a strong feeling between the two parties. During the year I visited the church several times, and felt at liberty with the brethren. I was told by several of the leading members of both parties that they would agree on me if I could serve them. And the clerk, Brother Isaac Hellings, once wrote me that they desired me "to come, and go in and out before them." I considered the matter carefully, and I could not feel any leading of mind to do so. Father thought that I feared it would be only a natural desire that would influence me to come to a church so well fixed in a temporal point of view; and he said to me that

he thought it right for a preacher to look out for a home. I said I knew it, but I had no mind to come, or to settle down at present. I did not feel that the Lord had directed me to serve the Southampton Church except as a supply while they needed supplies. I could not see the reason of this then, but did afterward. Twenty years passed by; I had taken charge of my father's family, had served ten churches, six of them at one time, and then I was again called to the care of the Southampton Church, which was now less in numbers and in financial ability, and I felt that the Lord directed me here, where I have been serving the church twenty-four years. I was also called to be pastor of the church in Canada, but felt that my place was at Southampton.

I have written for the "Signs of the Times" since early in 1864, and some for several other periodicals which have been started since that time, and have told of my experiences and exercises of mind and of my work from time to time, but these things can never be fully told. It is my wish to recall and write down here a few of the many things of interest that I have met with and experienced during these forty-four busy years.

As I have intimated, when I closed my legal business I went to my father's home, which I had never ceased to call home, and took charge of the family which consisted of my brothers James and Warren, both invalids, with the wife and two children of the latter, three sisters, one of whom had been an invalid and hopelessly deranged mentally for many years, a sister of my mother near 90 years old, with my father and mother. Two older brothers, John and William, lived near, each having a wife and several children. I had never seen a death up to December, 1865. Within eleven years from that time twelve of those I have named died, eight of them in our house. In connection with the sicknesses and deaths of these there are some most wonderful things which were referred to in their obituary notices. The most wonderful experience and last hour of my brother James, with the five beautiful poems he wrote the last year of his life, I intend to present to the friends in some way hereafter.

From this home I traveled far and wide, going only where invited. For several years I traveled sixteen thousand miles a year, and attended to our farm. The first call I accepted was to the Salisbury Church, Maryland, to come there as often, and stay as long, as I felt able to. That was given me October 27, 1867, and the relation has continued to the present time. The next call I accepted was to the care of our home church at Vaughan Hill, June 11, 1871. The next to Otego, N. Y., July 15, 1871. This church was then few in number, but was a spiritual church, and their meetings were regular, and Balas Bundy was regarded by the members as called to the work of the ministry. He had resisted his impressions for nine years. I served that church about two years and three months, baptizing thirty-five, including Brother Bundy, who felt that his former baptism had been irregular. After his ordination I resigned the care. During the

same time I had baptized the same number in all the other churches I was serving.

February 17, 1872, I accepted a call from the church at Grover, which was organized within eight months after my first sermon preached there, which I understood was the first Old Baptist sermon ever preached in that neighborhood. About August 24, 1872, I accepted a call from the church in Waverly, N. Y.; October 30, 1875, a call from the church at Burdett, N. Y.; January 5, 1878, a call from the church in Utica, to visit them once in two months, while Elder Balas Bundy visited them also once in two months. August 3, 1879, I accepted a call from the Ebenezer Church, New York City, to serve there monthly, and as much oftener as I could. Marvin Vail was baptized November, 1872. Very soon it was evident to the church that his mind was exercised about preaching, but it was three or four years before he consented to say anything about it to the church. He was ordained in October, 1878, I believe. He was immediately fully engaged in the work. I resigned the care of that church in April, 1881, and of the church in New York City in March, 1883. I accepted a call to the Southampton Church, where I now live, April 12, 1884. I resigned the care at Burdett April 28, 1883, and at Grover August 17, 1884. For some time I visited the church at Vaughan Hill once in two months, and Elder Charles Bogardus once in two months. Afterward he took the entire care. I visit the place once a year. Only three members are left. I have for about fifteen years visited a small church at South River, N. J., as frequently as possible, going often from Southampton after service, for a distance of about seventy miles to speak there at night. The Southampton Church has meetings every Sunday, and I am present most of the time. Also every alternate Saturday before the second Sunday, and every first Thursday. Every fifth Sunday and Saturday before, I am at Salisbury, Md. Have missed but seldom in twenty-four years.

Besides this I visit other churches in our vicinity occasionally and the associations we correspond with. I make at least one visit of nearly two weeks to the covenanted church in Canada, one or two visits a year of nearly two weeks to the churches of the Licking Association in Kentucky. I also still make some pleasant visits to churches in Georgia, in Florida, in North Carolina and Virginia. That is my work now at 75 years of age.

SOUTHAMPTON BAPTIST MEETING HOUSE

INTERIOR SOUTHAMPTON BAPTIST MEETING HOUSE

Chapter V

TWO SEED DOCTRINE—SOME INCIDENTS

In August, 1865, I went to Northwest Illinois, Ogle County, to meet my eldest brother's widow, whom I had never seen. He went to Missouri when I was about sixteen. His wife and two children died and he married again. He was killed in the war, and his widow and five children drove six hundred miles to relations in Illinois, where I visited them. Elder Clement West, a younger brother of Elder Hezekiah West, lived in Palo, Ogle County, and had urgently invited me to visit the Northwest Association of Illinois, which was to be held at Howardsville, Stevenson County, Ill. In an interview with Elder West, he had told me that the "Two Seed" doctrine was held by some, although all the ministers did not hold it, and most of them tried to hide it. On that account he would not attend the meeting, but urgently desired that I should do so.

At this association I met Elder J. P. Allison, now for many years a member of the ?? Association, with whom it is still my privilege to correspond. He preached well. I met here Brother Henry, a colored preacher, a man well known through the western country, and a most interesting preacher and a spiritual man. I spoke at a private house on the evening of my arrival. When I concluded, they called for Henry. I had noticed a colored man sitting near me, but had never heard of Henry. He arose and began to speak of Aaron's priestly garments, and of the bells arranged upon them, "And I was watchin' and a-listenin', while you was speakin', my brother, an' if I hadn't heard them bells, I'd a spoke out, Henry would." It was good to hear him speak.

Elder Benjamin Saller, a good preacher, preached the introductory, using as a text Eccl. 9:14, 15. I noticed nothing to object to, but I heard that Elder Long complained to him because he did not tell plainly where the great king came from. I gathered that he understood that great king to be the devil, and that his existence and kingdom were eternal. On Sunday morning Elder Allison preached first and I followed. In the afternoon Elder Butler preached, and Elder Long preached last. He told me he had the arrangement made so I would have the best time to speak. So far I had not noticed anything erroneous in the preaching. Elder Long used the words: "Where sin abounded grace did much more abound," Rom. 5:20. Soon he said: "What ground does grace cover? I understand it covers all the ground that sin covers." "I know, my brother," he said, turning to me, "that Elder Beebe and other great preachers at the east, call us heretics because we assert this, but it is true." And then he went on with great vehemence and in an excited way, to assert that all that fell in Adam were saved. They were the only sinners, and grace saved them. That

the devil's children were born of Eve and were not Adam's children, and they would go back to the devil's kingdom where they came from. While he was speaking, the moderator came to me with a hymn book and said, "You have a strong voice, and I wish as soon as Elder Long is done that you would read this hymn. The young people who sing have come upon the ground and will sing." I saw he feared I would reply to Elder Long. There was a congregation of near two thousand. As he concluded I arose and told them what the moderator had requested. "But," I said, "I must leave tonight, and cannot be with you tomorrow, and so I will say a few words by way of a farewell. If a father should send out his son into a strange country he would tell him of all the dangers of the way, and describe the enemies he was likely to meet with. This is what our Father has done. This book tells us not only the right way, but also every wrong way; and not only the truth of salvation by grace, but every error. There is just one principle in every different form of error. It is the opposition of the carnal mind to the plain, simple doctrine of election. The natural mind is opposed to the truth that the Lord should elect some of the fallen race of Adam to salvation, and leave others to suffer the just desert of their sins, and give no reason except that so it seemed good in his sight. Only by faith could any one know and believe that truth, and only by the spirit of Christ could any love it. Some believe that salvation is offered to all men upon conditions to be performed by them. That is because of their opposition to the doctrine of election. Others declare that all men are eventually saved. That is because of the opposition of their minds to the sovereign will of God. Others believe that there is an original difference among men, some being the devil's children and not the children of Adam. I have no more fellowship for that sermon we have just heard than for the rankest Arminian sermon I ever heard." There was great excitement, but I spoke very rapidly for some time, and the scriptures seemed given to me to expose the error of what we had just heard. While I was speaking, he said, "What will you do with the multiplied conception?" I replied, "I have read the Psalms and Isaiah and the Gospels and the Epistles, and have never seen a word about it. And I am willing to leave it where Paul left it." "That is where we ought to leave it," cried out several from the congregation. "But," I said, "multiplication brings in nothing new or different." I then read the hymn and the congregation was dismissed. One said, "You have broken up our association." "Then it ought to be broken up," I replied. Another said, "You must have a talk with Elder Long." I said, "I have nothing to do with Elder Long, but I expect to be at that house over there two hours, and will be glad to talk with any of you." I did talk with Elder Saller. At first he argued strenuously. He said those who are lost were not children of Adam, and were never under the law. When I asked him why they were called the man of sin, he asserted that we could break a law we were not under, as I was then not under the law of Illinois, yet

could break its laws. But he soon gave up and said to me, "I will confess to you that I have never been clear in my mind upon this subject. Now I want to ask you if you have evidence that I am a gospel preacher?" "Most surely I have," I replied. "And now you are older than I, but let me advise you never to try to preach upon a subject until it is clear in your own mind." He was a good man, and his wife, who stood by his side during the argument, was clear upon the subject. The result was that the association dropped the church from which the trouble came, and were afterward able to dwell together in peace and love and unity.

Twice, a number of years after this, I had a contest upon this most dangerous heresy; once in Canada and once in Crawfordsville and its vicinity, Indiana. In Canada the attempt to introduce it under cover was defeated, but a few of the most excellent brothers did not fully understand how great danger they had escaped until more than a year had passed by, and during that time they felt hurt with me. But they fully understood after awhile, and the utmost cordiality and confidence were manifested again toward me. They are gone home to glory now.

In Indiana after preaching several times in churches where that "Parker's Two Seed Doctrine" prevailed, I had a conversation with an elder, esteemed a leader among them, in the presence of thirty brothers and sisters, twenty of whom were with him in belief. This was December 30, 1878. At first he seemed inclined to put the subject off lightly, and with levity. They did not want a division, for many in the association were clear in the truth, and they hoped finally to get the whole association with them. At length I said, "Now, Elder Skeeters, this is not a becoming way for you to talk. I will wait till you are done joking, and then I am going to get answers from you to four questions, or an acknowledgment before these brethren that you do not dare to give them. And when I get your answers I am going to use them." He at once changed his demeanor and said, "Well, ask the questions." First, "Were those who are lost created in Adam when he was created, and did they fall under the same law from which the Lord redeemed his people?" "No," he replied emphatically. Second, "Is this body of flesh and blood changed and made spirit in the new birth?" "Yes," he said, "the work is begun." Third, "Did the devil beget upon the person of Eve the bodies of the non-elect?" "Yes," he replied. Fourth, "Did the elect exist in bodies of flesh and bones in eternity before Adam was created?" "No," he replied. "I do not believe that."

Some of the leading ministers did believe it, but he differed with them. "Now," I said, "I regard this as a most terrible heresy, and dangerous to the welfare of a church and community. I have fought it wherever I have met it, and shall continue to do so. And your answers I am going to repeat before I leave the state. The following week I spoke upon the subject in Crawfordsville, and told what Elder

Skeeters had said, and advised the church to close their pulpit to that unscriptural doctrine. Dear old Brother Van Cleve, the pastor of the church, and as good a man as ever lived, heartily seconded me. He loved many of those men who were in this error, and it was hard for him to separate from them. But he was firm as a rock. The matter was brought into court, and I saw a newspaper in which one of the preachers said they were in peace till a certain Elder Durand came and made trouble. But the court decided that the Primitive Baptists were Elder Van Cleve and those who were with him in the old Bible doctrine, and that the meeting house belonged to them. I visited them in two years, and found the brethren and churches at peace, and have heard that they have continued so.

Two expressions of Paul are enough to disprove the Two Seed Doctrine. First, we were by nature children of wrath even as others, and second, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" Also did one ever say to the Lord, "I was better by nature than those who are not redeemed"?

From the Northwest Association of Illinois I went to the Licking Association held at the Elizabeth Church, near Paris, Ky. That was my first meeting with Elders Thomas P. Dudley, J. F. Johnson, Samuel Jones, Theobald and many others whom I have come to know and love and most highly esteem, and whose undisturbed fellowship and love it was my dear privilege to have while they remained here on the shores of mortality.

I was married July 5, 1882, to Clarice E. Pusey, in Baltimore. "A good wife is from the Lord." I regarded her, and still regard her, as the chiefest and most precious of all the blessings of the Lord to me. I have never found language to express the high regard and dear love in which I held her. It astonished me, and filled me with thankfulness to the Lord that he should have bestowed upon me this inestimable gift. She was inexpressably dear and precious to me. Her judgment was clear and safe. In both spiritual and temporal things she was my true and faithful helpmeet. I knew I was unworthy of her, but she never intimated a complaint on that account. We lived happily together thirty years, and on the thirtieth anniversary of her wedding day the Lord took her to her heavenly home in glory.

We had three children, one of whom died in infancy. Two are left, Edith, who lives in Winnipeg, Canada, with her husband, Gilbert McColl; and Mildred, who lives with me.

And now, at the age of 84, through the mercy of God, I am still preserved, and am able to attend my regular appointments for preaching the gospel, and am able to attend to the order and ordinances of the churches I serve.

IN THE IMAGE OF GOD

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. So God created man in his (own) image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them."—Gen. i. 26, 27.

In what does this image or likeness consist? Scott, in his commentaries, after discussing this question at length, says, "We determine, then, that the image of God in which Adam was created consists in an understanding prepared to imbibe true knowledge, a judgment free from corrupt bias, a will disposed to obedience, and affection regulated according to reason and truth; nor can we conceive that it could consist in anything else." By this last expression, as well as by others, it is evident that this view is adopted, not because of its own intrinsic force, but because there appears to the author no other way in which the subject can be understood. I think there are other interpretations of Scripture which have been accepted for the same reason.

I have never been able to see the propriety of this view concerning the nature of the likeness to God in which Adam was created, and it is in my mind to express my reason for objecting to it, and also to tell briefly what I think the Scriptures do teach concerning it. Whatever the Scriptures declare we are bound to receive, even though we do not understand it; for we know the words are right, and that the only Interpreter will open our understanding to know their meaning as soon as we need that knowledge. But we are not thus bound by the form of uninspired words, nor the views of uninspired men. When they are seen and felt to be in accordance with the inspired Scriptures we cannot but receive them; they come to us with the sweet power of light. But it is not right to adopt the views of any one when they are not thus commended to our consciences, though we may regard them as probably true, if we see nothing in the Scriptures contrary to them. When, however, we think we have positive light through the Scriptures upon the subject, we should do wrong to withhold it for fear of the reproachful charge that we think ourselves wiser than others. I have hesitated to express my mind at times for this reason, but I have been condemned for it. We should present our views for the consideration of brethren, not with the thought of exercising dominion over the faith of any, but with the hope that we may "be helpers of their joy." It is pitiful that I should keep back some thought that has brought comfort to my soul because of the fear that some one will say I am bringing in new things. New things! Will not that blessed treasure-house, the Scriptures, present new things to the saints of God until the last of the redeemed has been taken home to glory? "Both new and old." New to every longing, hungry soul whose various wants they satisfy, and to whose various circumstances they apply with all needed help and comfort; old because they are the words and work of Jesus, who is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever." The Scriptures

have not all been fully unfolded yet, nor have all the books that have been written, nor all the sermons that have been preached by the servants of God, supplied all the expressions that will yet be needed to tell of the wonderful things which shall be unfolded to the wondering and admiring view of the saints to the end of the world. The Lord's hungry poor will still be turning from the words of men to the word of God, and what is shown to them there in their times of hunger, and weakness, and affliction, will constantly tend to draw them together, and hold them in the bond of union and perfection, as no authority or power of men could do. The opening of the word by the Spirit to suit their needs, the love of Christ felt in the heart, the work of the ministry by his gifts, and the wall of salvation, will effectually bring the children of God into manifest union, and hold them there.

To overcome opposition to our view by anything save scriptural testimony could not be gratifying to an honest, thoughtful mind. If the force of the testimony I present is not apparent to any one I can have no ground of complaint against him on that account. If I am right, the One who made me see the truth upon that point can show it to others. If I am wrong, he who shows me the error does me good. If I have attached myself personally to any theory as its discoverer or special champion, in the sense that I regard any argument against it as a personal attack upon myself, it is likely I will be of no more use upon that subject to the Lord's people. If the Scriptures presented in opposition to, or in support of, any view do not carry conviction to the mind of my brother, I shall not help my case, nor instruct him in the truth, by speaking harshly to or of him, and calling his view a heresy. The servant of God must remember that he is never to weary in well doing, never to be discouraged by opposition; but in meekness to instruct them that oppose themselves; not instruct by his own authoritative assertions that such and such things are true, but by the proof constantly repeated and presented. He must remember that the positions he defends can only be forced upon the mind by their own intrinsic value. It is a sweet and lovely work, full of precious comfort to the servant, to repeat again and again, and show in every possible way the evident meaning of the Scriptures in which he believes is taught the doctrine he sets forth.

And now I will attend to my subject. An image or likeness of any man, or of anything, is a representative figure of that man or thing In that respect in which it is an image it is exactly like the original; not *almost*, but *exactly*, like it. An image of a man may be of gold or wood, and of any size; but the form and features must have been exactly imitated so that it cannot be mistaken or it is not an image. Now in what sense can man be said to be like God? Not in his body, all acknowledge, for God is a Spirit. The view that I have quoted from Thomas Scott seems to have been regarded by many as the only other possible understanding; but how can a man's mind be considered as in the likeness of God's mind? The correctness of the descrip-

tion of the parts of God's mind, as given by Scott, may well be questioned. God's understanding is not prepared to imbibe knowledge, for he has eternally possessed all knowledge, a thousand years being with him as one day. He has not a will disposed to obedience, for there is nothing for him to obey but the counsel of his own will. In his understanding, his will, his judgment, his affections, and in every attribute, he is altogether unlike man; the *nature* of these attributes is different. The Bible so presents them. God is infinite in every perfection. His thoughts and ways are not like those of his creature man.—Isaiah lv. 8. The Scriptures do not indicate a likeness to God in this respect, but they do indicate the contrary.

An image of a face or form must be exactly like the face or form, but may be of different size, and must be of different material. But an image or likeness of an invisible thing, as of mental or spiritual capacities, must be simply the same thing. So Christ is said to be "the image of the invisible God;" and again, "the express image of his person."—2 Cor. iv. 4; Col. i. 15; Heb. i. 3. This means that he was "equal with God;" "in the form of God" (Phil. ii. 6); one with God. But Adam was not made in the image of God in the same sense in which it is declared that Jesus was the image of God.

Jesus was "made in the likeness of men," in the likeness of sinful flesh" (Rom. viii. 3.), having all their infirmities and temptations, and bearing the guilt and shame and curse of all their sins; yet he was unlike them in that "he was holy, harmless, undefiled;" "he did no sin." So far as he was a likeness, the likeness was exact. So, while he was the image of God, and was God, he was distinct from the invisible God of which he was the image, in that he was the Son, the Head of the church, prepared to suffer for his people in their flesh, and to raise them with himself from sin and death to life and glory.

But to my mind the Scriptures do very clearly and distinctly set forth the nature and character of the similitude to God in which man was created. We notice some things which are important in the texts.

First. It is the first time during the record of creation that the Lord speaks in the first person plural: "Let *us* make man in *our* image."

Second. Each declaration that the Lord created man in his image and after his likeness, is followed by the expression, "Male and female created he them," as though this explained wherein the image or likeness lies.—Gen. i. 27; v. 1, 2.

Third. The name Adam was given to both the male and female, evidently before the woman was made. Also, while the man was yet alone, the command was given to him not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Fourth. When the woman was made and brought unto the man he said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh;" and he said of a man and his wife, "And they shall be one flesh." And Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living;

but she had been named in Adam with his own name before that separate manifestation.

Now, when the man had transgressed that command, the Lord said, "Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil."—Gen. iii. 22. What can this mean but that the image or likeness is now manifested? The image was complete before, but is now made to appear by the act of Adam in taking the fruit at his wife's hands, and following her in the transgression. "The man is become as (like) one of us." Is not that one the Son of God? And is it not clearly shown by the apostle Paul wherein that likeness or image consists? The apostle says that Adam "is the figure of him that was to come;" and he says it when referring to Adam's transgression.—Rom. v. 14. It would appear from this, and the declaration in Gen. iii. 22, alone, if nothing more upon the subject were found in the Scriptures, that the likeness in which Adam was created is the likeness of Christ, the Son of God, in his mediatorial relation to the church as her head, and that the similitude (James iii. 9) or image consisted in his being created male and female, and in the one name Adam being given to both while the man was still alone; and that the manner of the transgression manifested this likeness to that One in the Godhead spoken of as "one of us." But the apostle leaves nothing to be inferred or guessed at by us, for he brings the subject clearly to light.

First. He speaks of Christ as the second Adam; showing that the first Adam, as embodying in himself his wife and all his posterity, who are all covered by his name, sets forth, as an image or figure, Christ in his relationship to the church: "As it is written, The first man, Adam, was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit." "The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly."—1 Cor. xv. 45, 47-49. This shows wherein the likeness of Adam to the Son of God consists, referring exclusively to his relationship to the church, and beautifully setting it forth in this figurative way. Here also we have another illustration of an image, as being an exact likeness, not a partial one; those born of Adam bear his image, and those born of God shall bear the image of Christ, or be like him.

Second. The manner of the transgression was peculiar, and is of most important significance in the figure. "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived; but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."—1 Tim. ii. 13, 14. Here is where the man became "as one of us," one of the Godhead. The image or likeness existed before the transgression, but by this act of transgression, the man following his wife, the likeness was fully manifested. The image could extend no farther than this; for the first Adam could not restore his wife, nor could he return himself. But here the infinitely

superior power and glory and love of the second Adam appears. And how clearly and beautifully the apostle opens up this figure of male and female, husband and wife. "Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, even as Christ is Head of the church: and he is the Savior of the body." "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it unto himself a glorious church." "So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: for we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."—Eph. v. 22-32. Who can fail to see in this most wonderful language the meaning of the image in which the first man, Adam, was created, a figure or image of the second man, who is the Lord from heaven. And how richly the figures of Head and body, and Husband and wife, are blended, and yet each seen in its own distinctive character; and all setting forth the glorious mystery of the love of Christ to the church.

The man fell by that transgression from his first state in which God created him. He was made good, upright, pure, as a man. He was not a spiritual man, but natural. He was of the earth, earthy, and so all of his posterity are, and would have been even if he had not transgressed. He had not immortality, for we are distinctly told that Christ only has that (1 Tim. vi. 16), and all who possess immortality must have obtained it by a spiritual quickening from Christ, not by a natural creation in Adam. But in no sense have we a right to think or speak of Adam as imperfect, or sinful, or evil, or as lacking in anything as a perfect man when he was created, because the Lord made man good, upright.—Prov. But he sinned. It was not sin in his heart by creation which caused him to do that sinful act, for that act was the first of sin in the world. Sin came into the world then; "for sin is the transgression of the law." Ever since then sin in the heart has caused every sinful act and word and thought; but that act of Adam caused sin, or rather was itself sin. How do I reason that out? I do not reason it out at all. I just simply take the scriptural record and judgment; and from that I learn that I have no right to go back of that one act of Adam to find the first of sin in the world. It is a mystery, but it is true. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners."—Rom. v. 19. From a state of innocence to a state of sin, condemnation and death, I think ought properly to be called a fall.

Sin is a most terrible thing, as every convicted sinner knows. No one can know the offense and loathsomeness of sin but those who have

been made alive by the power of the second Adam, who is a quickening Spirit. To such poor sinners the subject that presents to them the love of Christ to the church, and his salvation of sinners, so sweetly and clearly as this does, must be full of holy interest and comfort. As Adam and Eve were one before the transgression, so Christ and his people were one in some wonderful, mystical sense before the world began. As Adam was given the command before Eve was formed, so when Christ came into the world he said, "Thy law is within my heart." —Psalm xl. As Adam said of Eve, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh," so of the bride of Christ it is said, "We are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones;" and the language of Adam concerning the wife is repeated by the apostle, and concerning it the apostle says, "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." Therefore, because they are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, as Eve was of Adam, Christ, the heavenly Husband, followed his bride in the transgression. These members of his body were seen by the eternal God, and written in his book before the world began, "when as yet there were none of them."—Psalm cxxxix. 16. So, as Adam took the forbidden fruit at his wife's hands, because they were one, and he loved her, and must be with her, likewise Christ came under the law where his bride, the church, was, and stood with her in her sin and defilement, and died for her, and by his death washed her clean from all sin, and made her pure and spotless in the sight of God. "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, and hath raised us up together."—Eph. ii. 4-6. This love was an everlasting love.—Jer. xxxi. 3.

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." This love is illustrated by the love of a mother for her child, by the love of a brother, by a father's love, and by that of earthly friends. But the most wonderful, the sweetest, the most mysterious, and the first love felt and manifested in the world, that of the husband for the wife, was especially designed to set forth in its fullness the love of Jesus for the church, and her love for him, which is caused and called forth by his love for her. And he who had this everlasting love for his bride, the church, was able not only to come under the law that condemned her, and lay down his life for her, but was able to take up that life again, and rise with her forever above the dominion of death, and "present it unto himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

And now, while the members of his body are yet in the flesh, and feel the bondage of corruption, they are given faith to see Jesus in this eternal relationship at times, and to behold the manner of his love, and to rest from the burden of depravity and of care in that love. And they are given at times to feel the power and refreshment of his love in their hearts; to realize that Christ dwells in their hearts

by faith, and that they being rooted and grounded in love, are able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth and length and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and that thus they are filled with all the fullness of God.—Eph. iii. 17-19. This love passes the knowledge of the wisest man, but is comprehended in its fullness in the loving, lowly heart of the littlest child of God, when Christ is present with him, dwelling in his heart by faith.

So the first Adam went with his wife into death, because of his love for her, but could not return, and therefore all his family are born in death. But from that great family of men, the Lord has chosen vessels of mercy without number, who are loved of the Father even as he loved his Son; and him he loved before the world began.—John xvii. 23, 24. These were given unto Christ, and this figure of the male and female in creation, of the man and his wife, sets forth the mystery of that wonderful love that the Son eternally had for them. And the second Adam came to them because they were his, because they were bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh; and he had power to redeem them, and to save them, and to make them feel his love, the sweetest, richest experience which the heart is able to feel; and he will cause them to bear his image, to be like him, and appear with him in glory.

"O for such love let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break;
And all harmonious, human tongues,
Their Saviour's praises speak."

DECEMBER 12, 1896.

HOW DO WE KNOW CHRIST?

I hope the dear Savior has been revealed to me as having died for my sins, and as now being my life, my righteousness, my redemption. If I have seen him at all, I know it has been only by faith. It is the only comfort and consolation of my heart, to feel some assurance that Jesus has made himself known to my poor soul, as mine, though I am so vile by nature, and so unworthy, because of my sins and sinfulness. The evidences that this is so do not appear to my natural understanding, nor can I present them to the natural mind of another. Love to God, and to his people, and his truth, is the chief of those evidences. That sweet feeling of heavenly love, with other emotions and exercises, such as meekness, peace, joy, humbleness of mind, patience, and the like, which are contrary to my nature, have been explained to me by the Scriptures as the work of the Holy Spirit, and as evidences that I have passed from death unto life, and that Christ is in me the hope of glory. These exercises of mind, the questionings concerning them, as to whether they are spiritual or only natural, and the sharp trials and bitter afflictions of soul, on account of the daily evidences of a corrupt nature, and the temptations of the enemy, make up my life; as Isaiah says, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit."

A few words in conversation, or a few lines in writing, may give to a spiritual hearer, or reader, clear and satisfactory evidence concerning the one who speaks or writes, that Jesus has been revealed to him; but days spent in talking, when the tongue is at liberty, and volumes of writing, when the heart flows into the pages, would not fully express what the exercised soul is passing through, nor would the utmost liberty in expressing the richest experiences of grace, keep one from again and again being tempted to doubt the reality of these experiences.

How did Christ appear to me? He first appeared to me in the words, "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Those words came with power, and through them the first hope I ever had was raised up in my soul, and for the first time I was made glad. His next appearance was in a feeling of peace which was given me, when I could not see any reason for it. The Scripture named it to me as, "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding." My sins seemed to be removed from me; the burden and curse of them were gone. That same burden has never come back, but O, how often my conscience has been pained by sins since then. The Savior has a few times been felt so powerfully within my heart, so sacredly near to me, and so all-embracing has been my love for him, that I could seem almost to feel him in the arms of my love, and could whisper my love to him, and could feel his answers of love and peace. Such times have been few, and how long it has been now since I have been favored with such a close and dear embrace, when it almost seemed that he did kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, as his precious words were made sweet to my soul; but those sweet seasons can never be forgotten. O! that I might have them oftener; O! that I might so live in the Spirit, and so walk with God, that his dear presence might be more sensibly felt by my poor soul, from day to day.

But did I never see any form, as of a man, with my mind or in my soul, at least, if not with my eye? No; I cannot say that I have. Did I never see him, or think of him, at such a time, as in a body of flesh like our own, and as occupying some seat somewhere in some particular portion of space? No. Although it would seem difficult, impossible, for me to describe how he has appeared to me, how I have felt his presence, yet I can say it has not been in form as a man, that I have apprehended him. I have ever felt that he has been revealed to me as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, when he bore my sins in a body which was like my own, except that his was perfect and sinless; but that now he is glorified, and that I know him no more after the flesh.

If I am told that I must believe that he now sits crowned with light, clothed in a body like our own, as one of our hymns says, I must reply that I have not so seen him in my own experience. My faith has not so beheld him; if he has been revealed to my faith. There are good

men who have thought that he does now exist in a body of flesh in heaven, and I will not fall out with them. But if they insist that I must so regard him, or they will not allow that I have known him, I must still say only so far as I have myself seen and known. But the Scripture seems to me to warrant my understanding of this, and confirm my experience. For as I have quoted, the apostle says, "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more."—2 Cor. v. 16. Again, "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of heaven;" and again, "We know not what we shall be, but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him." When he ascended up to heaven he was glorified, and sat on the right hand of God. He showed to his disciples, after the resurrection, the same body which was put in the grave, unchanged in any particular; to show that death had no power over it. Then that body became glorified, and that glorified state we cannot understand till we enter it. When our vile body shall be changed, it shall be like his glorious body, and then we shall understand it, and shall ever be with the Lord.

Of course we cannot understand spiritual things with our natural minds. Only by faith can we know them. Many conflicts among brethren arise from the effort to reconcile to our reason, things which are beyond the reach of our reason. Our reason has to do with the language which declares the miracles and mysteries of the gospel, but not with the miracles and mysteries declared; for they cannot be explained or understood by the exercise of reason. "The things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."—1 Cor. ii. 10, 11. Reason can deal with the record that gives account of the resurrection of Christ, can go far to prove its reliability, to assure us that the original language in which it is now presented to us, is the same used by the inspired writers, and that we have it correctly translated into our own language. But the inspiration of the writers, reason cannot prove, nor can it help to make any one believe in the risen Son of God, nor explain in any measure, the unsearchable mystery of Christ. All these things are the secret of the Lord, and are with those who are in the secret place of the Most High, and are received and rejoiced in by faith. But reason can seem to show us some of the inconsistencies that arise from its own attempt to understand and arrange spiritual things.

When Jesus was with his disciples, after his resurrection, he gave them clear evidence that he had the same body of flesh and bones which was put into the grave; that it was entirely unchanged by death; that the grave had not produced any effect upon it. Thus death and the grave, being forced, as it were, to receive that sacred body into their dread embrace, had received all that was due to them on account of the sins of all his people, and could do no more. His death paid the debt in full, and his own body being holy and sinless, could not be corrupted in the grave. When the appointed three days had passed, in-

cluding the Jewish Sabbath, to show that all the ordinances of that law were satisfied and taken out of the way, death could not hold him any longer, nor ever have any more dominion over him. So when he had thus showed himself alive, after his passion, by many infallible proofs, being seen of his apostles and other witnesses, chosen before forty days, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. This is spoken of in a number of places, as being glorified. Now if our reason insists that his glorified body must be in the same state as when he was with his disciples, so that we are warranted in speaking of it as a body of flesh and bones, reason itself will not only show the Scriptures I have referred to, but also other things, as in the way of such an understanding. The most striking objection that occurs to my mind now is this: When he was with his disciples, after his resurrection, as well as before, some could be nearer to him than others. Peter, the impulsive, impetuous, loving Peter, threw himself into the sea, and swam to land, in his haste to reach the dear Savior. In their last interview with him, Peter seems to be close to him, while the disciple whom Jesus loved, was following along behind. But in the glorified state there will be none nearer than others, and none following afar off, and none drooping, or backward, or out of sight. But all will be one with him, as he is one with the Father.—John xvii. 21-23; all will be like him when he appears, for we shall see him as he is. —1 John iii. 2; all will be near to him, and all will be satisfied with his likeness.

These are mysteries not possible to be understood by our natural minds, but are they not taught in the Scriptures, and do we not feel their tone in our present experience? In our present state we do not recognize the Savior's presence with our natural powers, although our natural powers are affected and controlled by his presence. When he is felt to be far from us, or absent altogether, it is our sins that we feel cause this, and not that others are occupying his attention, and crowding around him, so as to keep us from getting near, as was sometimes the case in the days of his flesh, when even his mother and brethren were shut out by the crowd. When he is pleased to come into our souls with his blessed power, and shows us his tender pity, and his unspeakable love, we feel more sensibly than at any other time, that all the multitude of the redeemed are close to him, without hindering us in the least from resting and rejoicing in the bosom of his love.

I believe that Jesus has "gone into heaven" with that glorified body, and "is at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens;" and I believe that he shall change our vile body when he shall appear, "that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the power whereby he is able to subdue even all things unto himself;" and I receive contentedly, and hold fast, whatever the inspired Scriptures of truth say concerning these sacred mysteries; but I have long since ceased to expect any comfort or rest from the efforts of my own natural reason, or that of any one else, to get up among these glorious

mysteries and explain them, and set them in order, according to natural principles. I am determined (with Paul's determination, I hope) to hold fast the form of sound words, which I have heard of him, in faith and love, which is in Christ Jesus; but I wish to wait patiently for the time when Jesus shall himself make me know their meaning, and feel their power, and not feel bound by any form of words, in which men have sought to establish their meaning, except as I thus feel their power.

I think my heart goes out in love to all who love the dear Savior, and with desires and prayers for their peace and prosperity, and may we all remember, while we labor for each other's welfare, that the days of trouble, perplexity and ignorance will soon be ended for us, when we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. However weak, and dark, and poor we may feel ourselves to be, from day to day, we shall not go far wrong, nor fall far behind, while we truly seek the mind of Christ, and desire to be led by his Spirit. And, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory."

MAY 12, 1897.

FRAGMENTS

TO BE brought to the place where we can say, "Thy will be done," is a blessed thing. It is an experience of the Lord's work. Only the Lord can cause our anxieties, and urgent endeavor to cease, the weight and importance of worldly things, to drop from our minds, and a willingness to come into our hearts to "commit our way unto the Lord," and to ask him with our whole heart to guide us, and to conform us to his will. How restful it is to our souls, to feel that we are saying from the depths of our hearts, "O Lord, lead us: Lord, show us thy will in this thing, and let us walk according to it. Open the way before us." When we have been enabled to trust in the Lord, "delight ourselves in the Lord," and "commit our way unto the Lord," it follows that we do "rest in the Lord."—Psalm xxxvii. 1.

How hard I have tried at times, or thought I did, to "rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him;" and sometimes I would try to think I was resting in him, and that my anxious efforts to decide as to the course which would be best, and to accomplish that which I had decided upon, were really efforts to work out his will. But soon I would see that there was no rest in this, no felt confidence in the Lord as my Guide, no casting of my care upon him. Then how impossible I have found it to seek him with my whole heart, and wait for him. Some desires of my own held me back. I wanted my own way. How far from the Lord I seem at such times. Conscious that I am not forsaking all, not taking my cross and following him, not giving up my will, I yet do not know how to do so, or even how to desire to do so. As in all other things pertaining to our experience, we must first see and feel our need, and our helplessness to supply it, and the opposition

of our depraved natures to the will and ways of God, and then we shall be prepared to know and appreciate and rejoice in his own blessed work, when he works in us that which is well pleasing in his sight. How quietly, how sweetly, how unexpectedly we feel our hearts drawn out in prayer and supplication to the Lord to choose our way for us, and how without any effort of our own, our minds give up the struggle, and are relieved from the burden, and experience an unspeakable rest in waiting patiently for the Lord, assured that he will guide us, and in some sure way let us know his will, and provide for us. This feeling of confidence in the Lord does not cause carelessness, nor make us indolent. On the contrary, we are more than ever awake to duty, careful to do what our hands find to do, attentive to the voice of our dear Redeemer, that we may hear his commands to us, and may know and do his will.

All the inspired writers write from their own personal experience, to which they often allude. They do not take up some point of doctrine or order as a subject, and discuss it, but they write out of their own hearts. They tell what they have seen and felt, by the working of the Spirit of Christ within them "testifying," whether beforehand, or afterward, "Of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." So as the living soul reads the Scriptures, he reads in all its variety, only various expressions of his own experience. Wherever there is a feeling of self-loathing, on account of sin, there is in the same heart a sweet feeling of love to God, and of hunger and thirst after his righteousness. Wherever there is a downcast and discouraged feeling because of a felt depravity in our nature, and of sin and transgression in heart and life, there is also somewhere in the mysterious recesses of the same heart, a holy assurance of God's love and salvation. If we cannot realize this at the time, yet the Scriptures so present it. Look at the fortieth Psalm, and see how all the variety of experience is there, from the highest joy, and fullest assurance, to the lowest depths of sorrow and heart failure. The same one who declares that God has delivered him from the horrible pit, and hath put a new song in his mouth, and that the law of God is in his heart, and that he has preached righteousness in the great congregation, also says immediately afterward, "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up; they are more than the hairs of my head; therefore my heart faileth me." Thus he is with his people in all their trouble on account of sin, as well as in their wonderful joy in the hope of salvation. Then he declares in the form of a command, that all who seek the Lord shall rejoice and be glad in him, and all that love his salvation shall say continually, "The Lord be magnified;" and closes this wonderful Psalm by expressing what every poor, trembling child of God feels while here in this world of sin and sorrow, "But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God." Thus Jesus,

whose spirit spake through the psalmist of his own sufferings and his glory, tells the feelings of his children, and interprets them. We find this and many another Psalm to be just like a glass, in which we see our own hearts presented before us. All that we know of Christ is what we feel of the fellowship of his sufferings, and of his joy; and all that we understand of our own experience is by the witness of the Spirit of Christ through his word in this way.

Observe also the forty-second Psalm. The same one who says, "O my God, my soul is cast down within me," and "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me," also says immediately, "Yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life." We may hide a sin from the eyes of men, and even from our own eyes; or if not hidden, we may excuse it both to ourselves and others. But when the Lord comes to deal with us, the wrong, however slight it may have appeared to us, can neither be hidden nor excused. It will interpose itself between us and him, and remain an immovable barrier to his felt love and favor, until it has been fully and humbly confessed, repented of and forgiven. As it was said to ancient Israel, "Your sins have separated between you and your God," so it must be said to his people yet, and through all time. Sin is a separating power. No one can hold a wrongly acquired gain in one hand, and the felt favor of God in the other. One must be given up. The one who wrongs a brother is far more to be pitied than the one who is wronged.

If we should see a man in the street proclaiming that with his lamps, candles and various kinds of lights he would show the sun to all who would come and submit themselves to his instruction, would we not regard that man as lacking in his mind? What are we to think of him who proclaims that with the lights of human reason he will show the Sun of Righteousness to all who will attend to his instruction? Can any one find the sun at midnight? If one should be sent out at night to find the sun, who had never seen him, he would be likely to stop at any great earthly light and say, "I have found the sun." So if one is sent to seek the Lord, he is likely to make just such radical mistakes. The sun will never be found till he rises upon us, and he will never be seen by the aid of any light but his own. So the Sun of Righteousness will never be found by any one until he rises upon that one "with healing in his wings." The sun can never be seen except in his own light; so the psalmist says to the Lord, "In thy light shall we see light."

NOVEMBER, 1897.

JOSEPH

I, in common with many others, have regarded Joseph as intended by the Holy Spirit to represent Jesus in many things, in a typical way, and have so presented the subject, both in speaking and writing.

My reasons for regarding Joseph as representing Christ are:

First. We are authorized to look for a presentation of Christ in some way in all the Scriptures, either typically, prophetically, or in parables. The testimony of Christ is not only the spirit of prophecy, but is the purpose for which all the inspired Scriptures were given. I do not understand that the Scriptures tell us directly who were intended as types of Christ. We know that some who appear very clearly as typical of his person and work in some part of their life and actions are not directly said to be types, as Joshua, Samson, Hezekiah and others. In the light of the New Testament Scriptures, the meaning of Old Testament things appears, and in having come unto Mount Zion we have "come unto the spirits of those just men" of old "made perfect;" unto the spiritual meaning of what they did and said, as they were moved by the Spirit of Christ which was in them.

Second. The peculiar history of Joseph presents such a likeness to the things of Christ, and is of so unusual a character, that it appears to me as though the likeness and the recital must have been according to the purpose of God, to set forth in that typical manner "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." We cannot think that the Scriptures are occupied with the relation of personal incidents and histories because of the intrinsic interest of them, without reference to their relation to Christ. Let us notice some of these peculiar incidents and circumstances in the life of Joseph. The first-born of Jacob's first loved and best loved wife, though second in marriage, he also received the birthright of Reuben, the first-born of all the sons of Jacob (1 Chron. v. 1, 2), that he might in this respect also have the pre-eminence among his brethren; loved by his father more than all his brethren, and receiving as a token of this special love, a coat of many colors; dreaming and telling to his brethren prophetic dreams, in which his exaltation over them is foretold, and thus exciting their hatred against himself; sent by his father to see after them, and when one found him wandering in the field and said, "What seekest thou?" he said, "I seek my brethren;" taken by them with intent to kill him who had come for their good, but prevented by the intercession of one of them, who, although showing his tenderness, yet united with the others in concealing the crime from their father, and evidently shared in the price for which his brother was sold; suffering in the prison unjustly, until "the word of the Lord tried him," and caused the king to release him; laying up corn during seven years of plenty for those who hated him, and thought him dead; occupying the most exalted place in the kingdom, next to the king, when his brethren are driven by famine to come before him, seeking to buy of his corn; his knowledge of them, while they knew not him; his rough manner of speaking to them, charging them with evil motives in coming down to Egypt, which, though not true, brought them under solemn conviction of conscience for a greater crime, known only among themselves, as they supposed, and confessed to each other with sorrow,

without a thought that the man before whom they stood trembling understood what they said, much less that he was their brother against whom they had so terribly sinned; imprisoned three days, then brought out as an act of special mercy, given corn for their need, and sent back with supplies for their father and families at home, but with a command that must bring them back again with the youngest brother; the finding of their money in the mouth of their sacks, showing that whatever was received by them from him who was to represent Jesus in the gifts of his grace, must be received as a gift through love and mercy, and in not the least degree as paid for or merited; their second coming with a full surrender of all that was held dear by their father and themselves, and yet with no thought of any other way of getting the needed supply than by returning the former money, and also with money to pay for that now asked for; the manner of their coming before him the second time, the release of Simeon, the words of the steward, "I had your money: God gave you treasure in your sacks;" their astonishment that he should have them dine with him, and that he should have such knowledge of the age of each one; his deep emotion as they talk before him, causing him to enter into his closet to weep; his course with them in bringing them back as criminals, and Benjamin, who was innocent of their crime, as the worst of them, appearing to have stolen the divining cup, and thus condemned by their own judgment to die; their entire humiliation before him; the plea of Judah for Benjamin's deliverance, he having become surety for his return to his father; the final closing of this most terrible interview to them, by Joseph making himself known to them with that great outburst of tenderness, and love, and joy which had been so long restrained, and the wonder and joy and fear of the brethren as they hear the wonderful words, "I am Joseph, your brother," and see in the man before them, who had spoken to them so roughly, and before whom they had been so abased and humbled, and consciously guilty, the very brother against whom their crime had been committed, and as they find that, instead of feeling hatred, and determining upon revenge, he felt only love and tender pity, and a heart full to overflowing of joy, because he could see them again, and because he was able to deliver them from their suffering and keep them during all the years of famine yet to come.

Such a wonderful likeness as the poor sinner sees and feels in all this, to his own experience in being brought to a knowledge of Jesus as our Savior, cannot, it seems to me, have been without purpose on the part of our God. When thousands and thousands of the dear children of God have felt their own relationship to Jesus shown to them through this wonderful story of Joseph and his brethren; their sins against him; their felt guilt before him; their efforts to obtain his favor by some merit of their own, and their disgraceful failure; their final giving up of all hope, and then the surprising and soul-enrapturing revelation of Jesus as their Brother and Savior, who has

loved them with an everlasting love; how shall we say that it was not thus to set forth Jesus and his salvation, that this personal history was given by inspiration of God? And we notice the greater minuteness of the recital at those places where the experience of the Lord's people is especially presented in the most important particulars.

Third. Joseph is never spoken of as a tribe of Israel, as are the other sons. In Numbers xiii. 11, the expression is used, but followed with an explanation: "Of the tribe of Joseph, namely, of the tribe of Manasseh." It is also used in Rev. vii. 8, but the tribe of Ephraim is there meant, for the tribe of Manasseh has already been mentioned, which constituted part of the house of Joseph. This expression, "house of Joseph," evidently represents the church, in Amos and other places. Jacob claimed of Joseph his two sons to be his own, as Reuben and Simeon were his; and each of them became a tribe in Israel, and both constitute the house or children of Joseph. Thus Joseph had one portion above his brethren, Gen. xlviii. 22; Ezekiel xlvii. 13; his two sons were given the birthright of Reuben, who had transgressed. "For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's."—1 Chron. v. 1, 2.

Fourth. The manner in which the psalmist refers to this shows, to my mind, that his faith has Christ and his people in view as he recounts the incidents, for he speaks of them not in the order of their literal occurrence, but in the order of the experience of them in their spiritual significance. The famine and hunger are the beginning of the knowledge of spiritual things. Then the sending a man before them, even Joseph. The wicked acts of his brethren are not here referred to, Psalm cv. 16-22, but the declaration that the Lord sent him before them assumes all the circumstances of his getting into Egypt as part of the Lord's purposed way, and brings to view the sins of the Lord's people, in this type, which caused him to go before them, and become a servant, and suffer that they might live. The psalmist "foresaw the Lord always before his face," and speaks of such things only as set forth Jesus and his salvation.—Acts ii. 25-31.

Fifth. The peculiarity of the blessings pronounced upon Joseph by both Jacob and Moses. Both use highly figurative expressions that would hardly apply to Joseph naturally, even with all his wonderful experience, but which suggest at once the One who was greater than Joseph. The fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall, suggest him who is the Branch, and the goodly Vine, and the Well of salvation, and the Wall of partition between Jew and Gentile. The speaking of archers that hurt him, and of the strength in which his bow abode, reminds us of similar expressions which refer to Jesus in the Psalms. The parenthetic reference to "the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel," is very significant; and also the words of Jacob, "The blessings of thy Father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills; they shall be

upon the head of Joseph, and upon the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren," seem to me at once to direct our minds away from limited man to him who received the blessing, "upon the mountains of Zion," "even life for evermore," which prevails unto all his people throughout all generations. When Moses speaks of "the precious things of heaven, and the dew, and the deep that coucheth beneath, and the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and the precious things put forth by the moon, and the chief things of the ancient mountains, and the precious things of the lasting hills, and the precious things of the earth, and the fullness thereof, and the good will of him who dwelt in the bush," as abundant reasons for the blessings which he invokes upon the head of Joseph, and upon the top of the head of him who was separate from his brethren, it seems to me that his faith must have been looking away to Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, who answers in his glorious person and work to all these sublime expressions.

Sixth. This reference by both Jacob and Moses to Joseph as the one who was separate from his brethren, I have regarded as one of the special marks of his typical character. The separation, as expressed, would not mean from any one or two of them, but from all. As Joseph's presence among ten of his brethren only made them want to kill him, it must have been more comfortable for him to be separate from them. But this expression does not appear to me to be intended so much to refer to Joseph's personal feelings in the matter, as to state an important fact in his life, which was a far more important truth in the life and death and work of him whom I understand Joseph to represent, who trod the winepress of God's wrath alone, and of the people there was none with him; Isaiah lxiii. 3, 5: who said, "I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and alien unto my mother's children."—Psalm lxix. 8; whose disciples, when he was taken by his enemies, all forsook him and fled.

Seventh. The last expression in the blessing of Moses has no apparent application to Joseph as a man, but does clearly apply to the great antitype Jesus: "His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of unicorns: with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth." By his own power, sometimes compared to the horn of the unicorn, Numbers xxiii. 22; xxiv. 8; Psalm xcii. 15, Jesus brings his people to the end of earthly wisdom, strength and righteousness, and there they see the salvation of God.—Isaiah lii. 10. "And these are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousand of Manasseh." That is, they are his own house that he thus pushes together to the ends of the earth, and to whom he says, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."—Isaiah xlv. 22.

Eighth. The prophet Amos vi. 6, speaking of the prominent and confident pretensions of those who are at ease in Zion, the carnal professor under the law, presents as one necessary mark of a child of

God which they lack: "But they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph." When Joseph's brethren stood before him and were roughly spoken to, and charged with evil intentions, they were for the first time grieved for the affliction of their brother, in that they saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought them, and they would not hear, and they knew this distress to have come justly upon them because of their iniquity, which God had found out. So whenever any one has been brought before Jesus he is made to feel grieved for the very sins that pierced him, and to "mourn as one mourneth for his only son," and to "be in bitterness, as one is in bitterness for his first-born." This is true of all the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. —Zech. xii. 10. And to those who have felt that bitterness of grief on account of sin, it is a blessed thing to know that only those whose sins Jesus bore can feel that bitter sorrow. Only his brethren, but all of them, "are grieved for the affliction of Joseph." They alone know the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ.

I have not thought of Joseph as typical of the ministry, though it may be so in some sense. But preachers have no such control over the store of grace and spiritual comfort as Joseph had over the store of corn. Jesus alone controls and dispenses that, placing so much in the hand of each servant as he will have that one to give to the hungry at the time, and never giving to any servant a handful today for use tomorrow. No one has anything to do with his own preparation for the work of dispensing the good things of the gospel. If one has a larger amount and greater variety than another he is neither to be blamed nor praised for it, for he has only what Jesus gave; but if one should assume that he was prepared with a better variety than other servants of the Lord, he would manifest that he was carnal, and would be reproved in his conscience when awakened by the voice of the Lord out of his carnal sleep. The variety which would interest the natural mind would not richly feed living souls. The same blessed words of truth furnish in themselves a rich variety for the hungry soul; and this heavenly food, as Jesus hands it to the servants at the time they need to hand it out, is ever new and fresh. The one who esteems himself least sufficient, and most unprofitable, and therefore most dependent, is most likely to come to the saints with this rich variety, while he who regards himself as having it in store to use at any time, is most often found empty handed by the waiting, hungry soul.

Ninth. Joseph's prophetic declaration that God would surely visit his brethren, and the oath he took of them that they should carry up his bones from thence, seems to me to greatly confirm the figurative meaning. It was not his body but his bones that he spoke of. These were carefully preserved through all the years of bondage, carried up out of Egypt, and through all the wilderness journey, taken through Jordan, kept during all the wars under Joshua, and finally buried according to his command.—Josh. xxiv. 32. There must be some

spiritual significance in this, so carefully recited; and we cannot but think of the careful preservation through all the ages of the world, and through all the bondage and terrible wilderness of sin, of those who are manifest in the gospel as "members of Jesus' body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Jesus said of himself by the psalmist, "He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken."—Psalm xxxiv. 20. And again, "All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee, which deliverest the poor from him that is too strong for him?"—Psalm xxxv. 10.

JANUARY 25, 1898.

FAITHFULNESS

DEAR BROTHER: You said to me the other day, "I do not believe brother B. was ever called to preach." Did you ever tell that to him? If it is necessary for you to express your mind on that subject concerning one who has been ordained to the work of the ministry to me, is it right to let him remain under the mistaken belief that you have fellowship for his gift as a gospel preacher?

Not long since, you remarked to me that you feared that brother C. is in the habit of making an intemperate use of intoxicating liquors. Have you ever mentioned this to him? Do you answer that you have not done so for fear of hurting his feelings? But ought you not to have more fear of hurting his character, and doing both him and yourself a great wrong and injury by speaking of this suspicion to others instead of himself? Your suspicions may be groundless; but if they are true, then by speaking to him in tenderness and brotherly love you may be favored to convert him from the error of his ways, and so "save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins."

You said in conversation with me that brother D. does not control his strong temper as he ought to; that brother C. appeared to have acted dishonestly on one occasion, and that you feared he was liable to give way to dishonest inclinations; and that brother E. is too much addicted to levity, and to vain and foolish talking and jesting. These things may be true, but was it right and according to the gospel rule for you to speak of them to me or any one else, and not to the brethren themselves?

Do I take this course myself? Do I always speak of one's faults to himself instead of any one else, if I consider it necessary to speak of them at all? That is a very close question. I am sorry that I cannot present myself as an example of right acting in this matter on all occasions, if at all. I am so full of faults myself that it is hard for me to speak to another of his, even when circumstances make it clearly my duty to do so. Yet it is not right to neglect a duty on that account; and I fear it is selfishness and pride that would prompt me to do so instead of humility. But I try that if a brother hears at all of my disapproval of his course he shall hear it from my lips instead of those of another. I try that one shall not mistake my

feelings concerning him in any important matter. I have to acknowledge, however, that I find myself lacking courage, or honesty, or both, at times, and so fail at the important moment to do what I ought to have done.

For instance, I ought to have said to you when you began to speak to me of these things that I must not hear them unless there was some special reason—gospel reason—why I should be told with a view of correcting the evil, and restoring the erring one, and vindicating the truth. I ought to have reminded you that it is a reprehensible, fleshly principle which would prompt one to speak or to hear of the faults of a brother in Christ, except with the single, unselfish desire for his good and for the glory of God. I might have said truthfully to you that the same principle which prompted you to speak to me of the supposed faults of another, would lead you to speak to another of mine.

We may, by lightly speaking of some rumored fault or sin of a brother, do him a great and widespread injury and a gross injustice, when a word to him would have made the matter plain, and shown him not at fault at all. And the one thus unjustly and unkindly dealt with may see and feel the consequences of our thoughtless and unbrotherly course in the coldness of brethren without at all knowing what the trouble is, until the injurious rumor reaches some one who will act the part of a faithful brother. How careful we should be to "strive to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," moved by that charity which "thinketh no evil." How careful we should be that we do not exert the evil influence of that proverbial character who "separateth chief friends."—Prov. xvi. 28.

I am satisfied that it is not true tenderness and gospel charity which makes us hesitate and fail to tell a brother his faults. It is very hard to speak to a dear brother of that in his course and conduct which we clearly see to be wrong, but can we, in the fear of God, avoid doing so? Would not the tenderest feelings of love cause us to act most firmly to turn a child from danger?

Let us read our duty in the words of the dear Savior and his apostles, and may we take up our cross daily. "Let us have grace that we may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear."

April 5, 1898.

ETERNAL VITAL UNION

One of my correspondents says, "I would be pleased to read an article from your pen on the subject of 'eternal vital union.'" Some seem to think that this term carries the idea that the children of God actually existed in the annals of eternity before time was, but that the word "unity," in the place of "union," implies that the eternal life of the children was ever in Christ, while they themselves had not existence as such until manifested in the world by ordinary generation. I do not claim much as to the definition of terms and words, but I

have understood all along that where brethren used the term, "eternal vital union," they have generally meant that the saints ever had their eternal life standing in Christ Jesus, while they have their earthly standing in their earthly head, Adam, which has its beginning in time. Now, I could not more clearly and comprehensively express what I have always understood to be the truth upon this subject, than my correspondent has done. Those who are born of God, receive a life that was theirs in Christ before the world began, as in the natural birth the life existed in the father before it was manifested in the son. That the man who now receives eternal life in the spiritual birth was regarded by the Lord in that life before the world began, all must admit, for he was then chosen in Christ, and grace was then given him, and all spiritual blessings are now received by him according to that choice. (Eph. i. 3, 4; 2 Tim. i. 9.) This was a personal choice of an Adamic man before Adam was created; it was the writing in the book of God of one of the members of Christ's spiritual body, "while as yet there was none of them." (Psalm cxxxix.) Neither the eternal life alone, nor the Adamic man alone, the one distinctly from the other, is regarded in the Scriptures as the child of God. Though the eternal life eternally existed, and the Adamic creature did not exist until Adam was created, yet both are contemplated in the Scriptures when the children of God are spoken of, and the terms predestination, foreordination, foreknowledge and the like are used to express the purposes concerning them of that God "who inhabiteth eternity," to whom all things are ever present, and who "counteth things that are not as though they were." I have never used the term "eternal children," that I remember, for I have never thought that we are warranted in speaking of the life in the progenitor as a child. A will which gives an estate to children who are yet to be born, perhaps two or three generations in the future, does not regard them as children in existence when the will is made. So the will of God does not regard the children as in actual existence, as such, before the world began, but foreknows and predestinates concerning them. True, the foreknowledge of them on the part of God is absolutely certain, as it cannot be on the part of a man who makes a will concerning children not yet born, for he cannot know that there will ever be such a child to inherit under his will. Some do speak of "eternal children," and say that the children of God actually existed in a body of flesh and bones in eternity before Adam was created. I have talked with some called "Two-seed Baptists," who held that. Others speak of the "eternal spiritual children," meaning what I understand as the eternal spiritual life which is afterward manifest in the Adamic vessel of mercy. Those who insist that the life or spirit in its eternal existence is the child of God, will refer, as one proof, to Hebrews ii., and say that those children partake of flesh and blood, just as Christ did, and that as he was the Son of God before he partook of flesh and blood, so they were. But Peter speaks of the people of God as partaking

of the divine nature. Then the same argument would prove that they were children before they partook of the divine nature. Our brethren have generally held, so far as I know, that each child who is manifest in time by a spiritual birth, had an eternal standing in Christ, by virtue of that life, as he had a time standing in Adam from his creation; that is, a oneness or unity of life in and with Christ eternally. Many precious points of truth and holy experiences of salvation are the outgrowth, I believe, of that great, central, discriminating truth. But it is not my purpose now to enter upon the subject more extensively. Those who oppose what they call "eternal vital unionism," sometimes deriding it as foolishness, often make up the doctrine they deride, asserting things as believed by its advocates which are new to us who hold it, insisting that we hold that we were actually in Christ in the flesh. Sometimes I fear such are not truly sincere.

So, in regard to predestination, some who oppose that true and precious and solemn doctrine, will sometimes say, that if God purposed the wicked acts of men, then he himself does the wicked acts, and they will gravely profess to reply to us by saying that God does not work efficiently in the wicked to do evil, as he does in the righteous to do righteousness, as though we believed the contrary. Such arguments avoid the question, and create the issues to which they apply. And still they have to acknowledge that if God permitted a thing to be done, or even foreknew that it would be, and still created the world with that knowledge, then it was his purpose that it should take place. That truth a child can see, and the wisest man cannot evade it, and an angel cannot understand the full meaning of the glorious truth of God's absolute sovereignty in will and purpose and works. "He is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working." "His judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out."

JULY, 1898.

IN THE CLEFTS OF THE ROCK

This is where the Lord's people are when the dear Savior makes his love known to them. "O my dove that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." This also is their safe hiding place while they remain in this mortal state. But how may we know that we are in the clefts of the rock? What kind of an experience is this? If the gracious and loving words of Jesus to his dove are sweet to our souls, then it is sure that we are of those to whom they are spoken; but it may be far from sure to us at the time, because of our feeling of great unworthiness, and because we cannot see that we are in that secret, safe and sacred place, where the dove is said to be. The clefts of the rock, being the sure dwelling place of the dove, the bride of Christ, must be, as we think, a place most sweet and pleasant, free from trouble, and especially free from trouble on account of sin; and when we feel ourselves full of unrest,

hedged in, afflicted, cut off from our desires, unable to do what we would, finding evil present with us when we would do good, how can we think that we are in the clefts of the rock, and that the dear Savior can find any sweetness in our complaining, supplicating voice, or see any comeliness in our sorrowful countenance?

I have had some precious comfort in some experiences and thoughts upon this subject of late, and have for some time felt a strong pressure upon my mind to express, as I may be enabled, some of these things for the comfort of those who have been tried as I have been.

Moses said unto the Lord, "If I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight." And again, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory."—Exodus xxxiii. 13, 18. Such desires to see the Lord's way, and to behold his glory, are not from presumptuous curiosity, as we sometimes fear, but are the solemn actings of faith in the soul, preparing us for such revelations of himself as he designs to favor us with. He will hear all such questions, all such longings and pantings of the poor soul after him, and will answer them, but it will be "by terrible things in righteousness."—Psalm lxv. 5.

"And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said, Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, There is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away my hand, and thou shall see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen."—Exodus xxxiii. 19-23.

When all this took place (Exodus xxxiv. 1-7), Moses was alone with the Lord in that desolate mountain. "And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin." What goodness and blessedness are here in this name, as thus far proclaimed! What a garden of delights, filled with most lovely flowers and richest fruits. What more could be desired by a poor sinner who hates sin, and hungers and thirsts after righteousness? Well might we say, if permitted to enter into this wonderful name, and enjoy its rich blessings, "O how great is thy goodness which thou hast wrought for them that fear thee; which thou hast laid up for them that trust in thee before the sons of men."—Psalm xxxi. 19.

But there is another syllable in this mysterious and glorious name, which a sinful man cannot hear and live, unless hidden in the cleft of the Rock, and covered by the hand of the Lord. "And that will by

no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation." This part of the Lord's name is full of terror, and is fraught with death to every guilty soul. It as surely bars every sinner from the safety and beauty of that holy name, as the flaming sword prevented the return of Adam and Eve to the garden of Eden, and kept from them the way of the tree of life.

Whether Moses was literally put into a cleft of a rock or not, we have in this cleft a figure of the absolute safety that was given to him while the awful name of the Lord was proclaimed. The Lord's hand that covered him while his glory passed by, is not a literal hand, to be discerned by our natural senses, but expresses to us his sure and absolute protection from a danger which is not to the body merely, but to the soul.

As this great experience came upon him, "Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped."—Exodus xxxiv. 8. In the proclamation of this terrible name Moses' prayer was answered. This name is the revelation of the Lord's way, of his goodness and his glory.

This rock represents Jesus. "There is a place by me," the Lord said, "and thou shalt stand upon a rock." Here is the only foundation upon which a sinful man can stand before the Lord. That sacred Rock was smitten in order that the Lord's chosen people might be safely hidden while his name is proclaimed before them, and while his glory passes by. When Christ was crucified the guilt of his people was atoned for and removed, justice and judgment were executed for them, and the Lord's name was honored and glorified. That part of his name which declares that he will in no wise clear the guilty, still remains, but it does not exclude his people any longer, for they are free from guilt, being crucified with Christ, and thus hidden in the cleft of the Rock.

When "the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger" against sin, and "his lips are full of indignation" against the workers of iniquity, "and his tongue as a devouring fire" (Isaiah xxx. 27-30), none of all the sinful race of man can stand before him. No man can see his face and live. "Who may abide the day of his coming?" None but those whom the Lord has put in a cleft of the Rock, and covered with his hand. These were safe in Jesus while the wrath of that holy and terrible name was visited upon him. He was able to endure the stroke of the sword of justice, to die and rise again, and thus to "finish transgression, make an end of sin," and by satisfying the law to take the sting from death, and destroy that terrible enemy.

And as the Lord's people were saved when the glory of his name was proclaimed in the crucifixion of his dear Son, by being in him in that death in a wonderful and mystical sense, so that they are dead with him to the law and to sin (Romans vi. 7-11), so ever after, while in this mortal state, his sufferings and death are their only safe hiding

place. In their flesh they cannot stand before the Lord, nor endure the glory of his name, for in their flesh "there dwells no good thing." Those who have been quickened by divine life, realize that they cannot of themselves do one spiritual thing, any more than a dead man can do a natural thing; as the apostle says, "If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." —Romans viii. 10. And, as he further says, it is only as the body is quickened, or moved, by the Spirit of him who raised up Christ from the dead, that any man can do anything that is acceptable to God.

The experience of being in a cleft of the Rock must therefore be always crossing to the flesh. It must be an experience full of sore trials and afflictions. We ask the Lord, as Moses did, to show us his way; we beseech him to show us his glory. We want to see and understand more of his goodness. It seems to us that if he should be pleased to grant our desire, we should be at the height of bliss. How little we know of his wonderful ways. He does answer us, but it is "in such a way as almost drives us to despair." "By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation." We "are shut up and cannot come forth." We find ourselves more and more unable to do the good that we would, and we are left to doubt at times even whether we have a desire to do good. We are hedged in by our sinfulness and utter weakness, and by the judgments of God which seem to go out against us. We cannot do what we would in providence. Poverty holds us in its dire embrace. We cannot succeed in our work. We hate and dread to be in debt, but debt comes upon us, or danger of starvation for those dependent upon us. Or we do prosper in worldly affairs, and find wealth, but with it there comes leanness into our souls. There is a famine even in the midst of plenty. What we have will not feed our souls. We cannot enjoy the temporal prosperity that comes to us. If we would help others we fear our motives are base and selfish, and that we are only hypocrites. There seems to be a searching power within and about us, and we fear we are found wanting. A tempest is going by, and we tremble; yet cannot see what destruction it is working. We are like those whom the Lord had shut in the ark. They could feel the terrible power of the winds and waves, but could not see what it was. They felt the beatings and tossings and shakings of the ark, and afterward the quiet and peace, but could not know the meaning of it all until the cover was taken off the ark. Then it was all made plain, and the beauty and glory of the rainbow showed to those who had passed through the storm, and who now stood on Ararat, holy ground, a blessed purpose of God in the flood.

In the cleft of the rock, covered and held down by the Lord's hand, how terrible must have been the experience of "Moses, the man of God." Not another soul in all that desolate mountain. The Lord was there, but not visible to his mortal sight. How long he was in

that cleft it is not material to know. The power of fear and pain is not measured by time. In a moment the soul may be overwhelmed with terror. In what way the power of that name came by, we do not know, whether there was a literal quaking of the mountain, with fire and smoke and thunder, as when the law was given, or whether the awful power of the Lord's name was felt only within his soul, we do not know. What we do know is that a cleft of a rock must be a most uncomfortable place to be in. We also know there must have been a terribly destructive power in the passing of the Lord before Moses, if he must not only be put into that cleft, but must also be covered by the Lord's hand in order to be saved from destruction.

But O, what a blessed time that is when the Lord's hand is taken away, and we are enabled to see his wonderful works which he has done, and to behold the glory of his name which has already been proclaimed. We could not see his way before he had passed by in it. We could not know what he would do before he had done it. We cannot see his face as he comes toward us in his work of salvation. To see him coming in those "terrible works in righteousness," by which he saves his people, would kill us with terror. But after he has passed by in the fulfillment of all that terrible work, by which his glorious name is honored, the law magnified, and his people saved, then it is joy unspeakable to see his back parts, to see the glory that follows him. We cannot see him working, but we see the work when it is done. Even then, while in that experience of fear, of inability to see, like those in the ark, what caused the great commotion; in that experience of sinfulness and condemnation, and utter inability to do any good thing, even then the secret of the Lord was with us, though we did not know it. We were far from the thought that this was God's work in bringing us to himself. We could not then have believed that this affliction, this inability to move in any way of righteousness, was because we were in a cleft of the Rock, because we were being crucified with Christ in our experience. We could not have believed that this tribulation in our souls was because the Lord had put his fear in our hearts, which "is to hate evil." But all this fearful exercise in our souls was the secret of the Lord, and when he removed his hand from over us, and showed us his covenant, then we understood that this was his wonderful work of salvation which he had begun in us, working in us "to will and to do of his good pleasure." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew unto them his covenant."—Psalm xxv. 14.

Job was in that cleft of the Rock when he said, "O that I knew where I might find him." "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right that I cannot see him." The psalmist was there when he said, "I am shut up, and I cannot come forth;" and Jacob when he said, "All these things are against me." Jeremiah was there when he said, "He

hath hedged me about that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy. Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer."—Lam. iii. 7, 8. And Paul was there when he was blinded by the light from heaven, and could see no man; and also when, long afterward, he said, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Those who are in the clefts of a rock all of the time can do no work upon the earth. They cannot run to and fro in the sight of men; they cannot join in work or worship with those who are not with them in the clefts. They are helpless for themselves, and they cannot extend help to any who are abroad upon the earth. They will often feel their confined, cramped, shut-in position so keenly, that it seems to them that they cannot endure it. They want to get out into the midst of the world and do something, do some good to themselves or others, do something to show that they are not altogether nothing. But if they seem to be able to get such desires gratified for a little, they are so utterly ashamed of their works that they want to shrink away out of sight. They find of themselves what the psalmist said of every man in his best state, they "are altogether vanity." Then, in the Lord's own time, they learn the blessed meaning of this sad experience. They have not really been allowed to go out of that safe dwelling place at all, though they seemed for a time as one in a dream, to be working with the proud and wise of this world. They have been all the time, and yet are, held firmly by the hand of the Lord, notwithstanding all the rebellious lustings of the flesh against the Spirit. Now and then the gracious hand which covers them, and holds them in that narrow, confined place, is taken away for a little time, and they see the Lord's way, and behold his glory, and gaze with rapture upon the rainbow beauty and brightness of the everlasting covenant. And how they thank the Lord, and praise his glorious name, for his preserving power and mercy. How glad they are that he has overturned their plans, and broken down their strength, and disappointed them in their earthly hopes, and shown them that their works are vain, and that their days are vanity, and are as a hand breadth. Now they are rejoiced to see that the works of Jesus are perfect, and that they are all-sufficient, and cover all the ground of their needs for evermore. O, how beautiful and glorious the Lord's works are! How thankful they are for the sure protection they have had in that secret place of the Lord, from the windy storm and tempest which has been abroad in the earth, while they were so eagerly struggling to get away from the controlling and restraining power of God. Now they rejoice in their afflictions, for they see that salvation was in those afflictions. Now they rejoice in the tribulations that made them murmur and complain at the time, for through them they have been brought to "stand before the great white throne," from whence the river of the water of life proceeds, and have entered more and more into the experimental knowledge of the kingdom of God. And now they are called by the sweet

voice of Jesus. O, these blessed seasons, when faith prevails, when the hand that held and covered them is removed, and they see the back parts of the Lord, and realize the blessed effect of his passing by in his terrible works of righteousness, by which he has answered us. "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."—Isaiah xxxii. 17. And the soothing, comforting, joyful effect of that precious voice of Jesus, not heard by the natural ear, but felt in the heart; how sweet it is: "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock!" His voice speaks not in vain. "My sheep hear my voice," he says. When he speaks, then we know that we are his, and that we are dwelling in him, and he in us, and this by no work or wisdom of ours, but by his own power and grace. Those are the times when that voice of the Lord, which is powerful and full of majesty, is in our souls, that we can say, while our hearts throb and overflow with love, "My beloved is mine and I am his." The power of that voice removes our fears, and causes us to see that our afflictions have been light, and but for a moment, compared with the "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," which they have worked for us. We see now that these sufferings, which we sometimes felt sure were evidences of the Lord's wrath, were really the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings, and that to feel them was to be in the clefts of the Rock.

It has been truly wonderful to me, when I have felt adversities of every kind pressing so heavily upon me, and have been sure that they were evidences that God had turned against me, and that I must certainly lose the fellowship of the saints, if ever I had really had it, and must be cast out; when I have seen not only spiritual comforts gone, but all worldly prospects failing, and have felt not only physical strength failing, but have feared that the little mental ability I had was going, and that I was of no account, either in the world or in the church; when blankness was upon my life, and darkness was settling heavily down upon my spirit; at such a time how wonderful it has been to find some words of the dear Lord in my soul with power, and light, like the morning rising upon me, and to be shown in a moment that all this was but an experience of being in the clefts of the Rock, and a sure evidence that I was one of the Lord's hidden ones, crucified with Christ; that this was "knowing him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and being made conformable unto his death."—Phil. iii. 10. To be assured that this is the way the Lord separates his people from the world and self; that this was "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh;" dying with him, that I might live with him, even here; suffering with him, that I may reign with him, even while yet in the flesh, through the power of faith.

Then a constraining power is felt, making us turn our faces toward Jesus in love and praise, and causing our voices to "break out in un-

known strains, and sing surprising grace." It is the voice of the Lord, which breaks the cedars of Lebanon, which divides the flames of fire, which maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests, and causes every one in his temple to speak of his glory. (Psalm xxix.) It is the voice of Jesus, speaking with the holy, compelling power of his own unspeakable love, which removes the curtains of night, and lets in the morning upon our souls; which turns our thoughts and faces toward him in praise and holy expectancy, and causes us to make melody in our hearts unto him; for he says, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."

JANUARY 24, 1899.

THE FEAR OF THE LORD IS CLEAN

Psalm xix, 9.

And there is no other principle of action in the world which is absolutely clean. The motives that prevail among natural men are selfish and vain, having the hope of reward and fear of punishment as their principal characteristic. And this is the main principle which prevails in the teachings of worldly religion, as well as in the business of the world. In the doctrine of those whose minds seem most pure and exalted we find heaven presented as a reward for goodness, and the hope of which should be an incentive to good works, and hell as a place of punishment, the fear of which should be used to deter men from wickedness.

Although there is an effort, at times, in the teachings of some, to rise to the height of that true principle which teaches the doing of right for its own sake, and the avoidance of evil merely for its hatefulness, yet the natural mind is not capable of relying upon the efficacy of that principle alone to control and guide men in their conduct, but will constantly fall back upon the hope of reward or fear of punishment, as that which alone can be absolutely relied upon to affect the actions of men for good. And even among those who have evidently been taught of the Spirit, and have been called to the work of the ministry, we sometimes notice a hesitancy and backwardness in regard to this thing, a kind of question and doubt, injected by the unbelieving carnal mind, as to whether it will do to leave the system of rewards and punishments out of our religious teaching, and depend entirely upon the power of the Spirit of Christ which all his people have. (Rom. viii. 9.) It is the opposition of the fleshly mind that is manifested when any one begins to fear that if we teach the plain revelation of the truth as recorded in the Bible, and as experienced by every child of God, we will thereby encourage the Lord's people to indulge in sin; and that it is necessary to appeal to their selfish desires for rewards and their fears of punishment in order to keep them out of mischief, and hold them within proper bounds.

Whenever such worldly principles are sought to be maintained by those who profess to minister to the Lord's people, some false interpretations of Scripture will surely be the result, some holding back of the sweet fullness of the word of truth, and some consequent lack of true edification and comfort on the part of the spiritual readers or hearers. Whenever a child of God consents for even a little time to the thought that sinful things are to be avoided for fear of the punishment or suffering that will follow, even though he be kept from acting on that principle, he suffers loss. I would not be understood as denying the usefulness of these motives in worldly things. It is good for those concerned in the results when a right act is done or a wrong deed refrained from, whatever the motive which prompted the right or restrained the evil. But the living soul who is moved in his conduct by the consideration of the results to himself, instead of the character of the thing to be done or avoided, will realize no spiritual commendation and comfort in his conscience as resulting from the correct course he has pursued, but will either be lifted up with pride and vanity in the flesh, or will find himself in a desert place, with terrible leanness in his soul.

The Lord does not work as man works. His ways are as high above ours as the heavens are higher than the earth. Man's wisdom in its highest work on earth is "earthly, sensual, devilish." The Lord's, "wisdom is first, *pure*."—James iii. 17. The beginning of that wisdom of God is the fear of the Lord. (Psalm cxi. 10.) The Lord begins the good work in his people upon the principle of that wisdom which is from above, and upon the same principle he performs it until the day of Jesus Christ. (Phil. i. 8.) And this is the beginning of wisdom's work: "I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me."—Jer. xxxii. 40. Now this fear of the Lord is a pure and holy principle, very different from that slavish fear of punishment which hath torment. This holy principle causes one to hate evil as the Lord hates it, and raises up in the soul a reverential desire to "be holy as God is holy." Thus the very definition of this principle is given to this effect in the word of truth: "The fear of the Lord is to hate evil."—Prov. viii. 13. For this reason it is said to be clean: "The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever." —Psalm xix. 9. There is no other absolutely clean and pure motive in all the world, and therefore no other principle that can lead one in the paths of righteousness. However good the thing done, unless the fear of the Lord prompted it, the motive was not clean, and the act, therefore, was not pure in the Lord's sight. Whatever is not caused by this holy fear of the Lord, which is to hate evil, is selfish, unholy, sinful like the nature from which it proceeds.

This fear of the Lord causes those who have it to hunger and thirst after righteousness; it is, therefore, "a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death."—Prov. xiv. 28. It never ceases to spring up in the new heart in hungerings and longings after purity and holiness,

and in sorrow, grief and self-loathings on account of the depravity felt in our nature, and the sins that appear in our life. It is not our flesh, not our carnal mind or heart, which feels this hatred of sin and desire after righteousness, but the new heart, the divine life, where this fear of the Lord is. This holy principle of pure desire will never entirely cease to exist within the soul where once it has been implanted, nor ever entirely cease to spring up, however much the flesh may gain the ascendancy for a time; nor will it ever be satisfied until this mortal shall have put on immortality, and death shall be swallowed up in victory.

This is the principle which is ever at work more or less vividly in the Lord's people. Sin, however attractive to the flesh, is hateful to the quickened soul by reason of this fear of the Lord within. Fear of punishment or promise of reward would not avail against the love of sin in the natural man even in a worldly covenant. That was tried in the case of the children of Israel according to the flesh, to show that it would not avail. Neither fear of punishment nor promise of reward kept them from constant transgression, only when the Lord slew them did they seek him. (Psalm lxxviii. 34.)

Let it be remembered that fear of punishment or hope of reward never prevents heart sin nor produces true righteousness in the sight of God. Only this fear of the Lord, which is a fountain of life within, can do that.

Those who have been experimentally crucified with Christ, and now live with him, hate sin, and hate the flesh because of sin. Sin is a grief and a dread to them, and their prayer is that of Jabez, "O that thou wouldst * * * keep me from evil that it may not grieve me."—1 Chron. iv. 10. When a child of God refrains from doing what the flesh desires because of fear of punishment, he is glad to have avoided the evil, but his soul finds no sweet rest before God on account of it, for the secret selfishness of the motive is set in the light of God's countenance. It is the same when he does what he rightly ought to do. How often the poor soul is set to questioning his motives as they appear in the sight of a heart-searching and a rein-trying God. How thankful he is, and how humble and meek, when he has some precious evidence that faith is in exercise within him, and that the fear of the Lord has moved him. For only by faith can he ever see any righteousness for himself in Jesus Christ, or any deliverance from sin.

How glad one who is thus exercised is to know that all the way he has been led has been appointed of the Lord, and that his sins and infirmities, which cause him such self-abhorrence, are humbling him more and more before a holy God, and showing him the wonderful justice and judgments of the Lord, and are measuring to him his great and amazing mercy and grace. Does this make him love the sins he so hates, or cause him to desire to continue in sin? The question is abhorrent to the quickened soul.

How strange to such a man it sounds to hear one say that the belief in the predestination of God will have a tendency to make a child of God indulge in sin. How strange to hear one say that when Paul says, "All things work together for good to them that love God," he did not mean to include evil, sinful, wicked things, but only trials, afflictions, distresses, and the like; thus taking away the real comfort of this precious assurance. And most surprising strange to hear the reason of this conclusion to be that if we believe that the apostle meant to include sin among the all things which work together for good, it would encourage us to sin in order to receive good.

The Lord, by putting his fear in the hearts of his people, has made sin so hateful to them, and so obnoxious, that it becomes like a suffocating atmosphere to them. They can hardly breathe where it is. They are dead to sin, and cannot live any longer therein. To be in it is to be in a kind of death. Yet there is so much of sin in them that they are daily delivered unto death for Jesus' sake. They bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in their mortal body. In their flesh dwells no good thing. "The body," indeed, "is dead because of sin," in the experience of all those in whom is Christ. (Rom. viii. 10.) "But the Spirit is life because of righteousness." Here then is the condition of the Lord's people in the world; sinners, yet holy; defiled, yet pure; vile in themselves, but righteous in Christ; being dead, indeed, unto sin with Christ, yet alive with him unto holiness; having in themselves, as it were, two men, one corrupt, according to the deceitful lusts, and the other "after God created in righteousness and true holiness"; two principles, the flesh and the Spirit, contrary the one to the other, so that the child of God can never do the things that he would, and lacks comfort on that account, except as, from time to time, he is shown the good works he longs to do all done by the dear Savior, and he enabled by faith to walk in them, as he was foreordained to do. (Eph. ii. 10.)

Here is the wise and gracious work of God in Christ, whereby his people in this world are separated and taken away from the control of worldly principles, and are led by the Spirit of God. The warfare within keeps sin a hateful thing to them, and thus by the experience of that continual conflict turns them away from it in longings and cries unto God for deliverance from its baneful power. They need no offer of a reward for doing well, nor any threat of punishment to keep them from sin. The Lord has provided a higher, holier, surer principle of action than that. As it was with the Savior, so it is with his dear children, who have his Spirit; the reward is *in*, not *for*, keeping the commandments of God, (Psalm xix. 11,) and the pain and grief are in the presence of sin itself, which is hateful to his Spirit, not in the fear of the punishment that may follow.

Let not our brethren fear any more that the plain teachings of the Bible will encourage the Lord's people to sin, as though they were thirsting for sin instead of righteousness. Let us not fear to contend

for the truth concerning the absolute sovereignty of God, and to rejoice that he works all things after the counsel of his own will. Let no one try to take away one thing from the ALL things which the inspired apostle declares do "work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose;" for if it could be shown that one thing was intended to be omitted by the apostle because of its wickedness, then that declaration would have no meaning at all to the child of God, who is waiting and longing to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, as the apostle has just described him, and would be without one particle of comfort for him. Let us not descend in our teachings from the high and holy principles of "the high and lofty One, who inhabiteth eternity," to the low, and selfish, and unsafe principles of worldly wisdom, nor any more distrust the Lord's power to keep his people from departing from him, as he says he will, by putting into their hearts his especial treasure, (Isaiah xxxii. 6,) the fear of the Lord, which is to hate evil, and which, therefore, is clean, enduring forever.

MARCH 8, 1899.

FRAGMENTS

THE love of God in the heart is pure and true, and is ever fixed upon that which is pure and true, and never can rejoice in iniquity, "but rejoiceth in the truth." When it has once been drawn out to another in whom it sees the same love of God, it can never be withdrawn. We ourselves may be deceived, but that love never is deceived. If the fellowship which we thought we felt toward one has been utterly broken and destroyed, then it was not that fellowship which is founded on the love of God; for that charity is the bond of perfectness, (Col. iii. 14,) and the bond of perfectness cannot be severed. The one whom we love in the truth may have many faults, but that does not destroy our love and fellowship, for they are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. In that sense charity covereth the multitude of sins. (I Peter iv. 8.) But true charity does not excuse or justify sins or faults in one's self or in a brother, nor does it cause us to withhold any needed exhortation, admonition or reproof, but rather the contrary. The good and comfort of the one we love is our chief desire, for "love seeketh not her own;" and we cannot see one we love in a dangerous place without a desire to extend such help as we can. That love also seeks the honor of God's house, and so directs us to that which is according to his commands.

WHO showed to Abel the way of salvation? Who told him what to do to please the Lord, and comforted him when alone and in distress? Does not the same Teacher and Comforter have the charge over his people to-day?

Who gave Noah that faith by which he built the ark, and by which he preached righteousness? There was no man to tell him how to build

or how to preach, for he was the only righteous man in that generation. The preacher of the gospel to-day, and the gospel builders, must receive their faith and instruction only from the Teacher of Noah. He will teach them to profit, and lead them surely in the right way, and uphold them by his arm. All men who assume to tell them how and when and where to preach, are vain teachers.

Love caused Jesus to say to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan," because he savoured not of the things that be of God, but those that be of men. (Matt. xvi. 23.) But it is not our province to call a brother Satan because he speaks erroneously. We ought, however, to sternly recognize in our own words and actions, and in those of another, that which is from the wisdom of the world, which is earthly, sensual, devilish, and rigidly oppose it. But we need be careful that we oppose it with the spirit of that pure and peaceable wisdom which is from above.

July 19, 1899.

JONATHAN AND DAVID

The history of Jonathan and David in their relation to each other has a very peculiar interest. Even to the natural mind it is a wonderful and touching story; but, as is the case with all the Scriptures, its far deeper, its real and true interest and value, lie in its spiritual meaning. All that was written aforetime was written for our learning in spiritual things in this gospel dispensation. (Romans xv. 4.) This history has a striking gospel significance, which I wish to speak of briefly.

It is undoubtedly true that David was an eminent type of Christ, and that in most if not all of the incidents of his life recorded in the Scriptures there is set forth in a figure some truth concerning Jesus in his work of salvation. Jonathan appears to represent the Lord's spiritual people as they appeared under the law, while Saul as the anointed king represents Israel after the flesh, with the authority of the worldly sanctuary and carnal ordinances, and all that pertained to the first covenant. Saul and Jonathan were related in the flesh, and were both under that legal covenant, as the carnal Israelites and those who had divine life were all together under that law, and under its carnal service, and could not be distinguished from each other by anything peculiar to either in that legal work. But when David returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, Saul hated him from that time, while from that same time "Jonathan's soul was knit to the soul of David, and he loved him as his own soul." So when Jesus appeared, even in the prophecies of the Old Testament, as the conqueror of death, the enmity of the carnal mind was ever excited against him, and those who testified of him were persecuted.

I will dwell somewhat upon this battle of David. He was in the house of Saul after he had been anointed king, of which fact Saul was ignorant. Although anointed to be king, the kingdom was not to be given to David until Saul's death, then it was to be established to him and his seed forever. It was probably to signify the permanence of the kingdom to him and his seed that he was anointed out of a horn, while Saul was anointed out of a vial for the opposite reason. David always acknowledged Saul as king while he lived. Jesus was in the legal house, and subject to both parental and legal authority, but was not known as the anointed King by the legal rulers and princes of this world. He was not under their displeasure as a man, but only when by act or word he declared his sovereign power, and the work of salvation which he came to do.

When David was sent by his father to see his brethren, who were in the army of Saul fighting the Philistines, a champion of great size had come out of the camp of the Philistines forty days in succession, and each day had challenged Israel to choose a man to fight him. Upon his appearance all Israel were dismayed at the sight of him, and fled from him. Nevertheless Israel each morning, seeming to forget their fear of the previous day, went forth to the fight again, in the same armor, and again shouted for the battle, as though confident of the victory. But again they were afraid at the sight of Goliath, and fled from him.

The Philistines were gathered at Shochoh, (a thicket) which belonged to Judah, and pitched between that and Azekah (a cultivated ground). To my mind they, who were the great and constant enemies of Israel, represent our sins, and all the vileness of our fleshly nature, and it is in the wilderness of the flesh, between the flesh and the cultivated soil where grace reigns, the battle is waged. The great and fearful champion that comes forth from that camp of our enemies is death. Of him the Lord's quickened people must be afraid, for in the armor of the law they cannot overcome him, but must fall before him. Sin reigns unto death.

It was on the fortieth day of the champion's appearance that David appeared and accepted the challenge. So on the fortieth day Jesus overcame the devil in the wilderness. David could not go to fight Goliath without the authority of Saul, so Jesus must be recognized by the law as having the right to go into the conflict with death. He was authorized by the law, and put forward by the legal authorities as the one man who "ought to die for the people, that the whole nation perish not," though the high priest who uttered that prophecy by the Spirit did not himself know the power of the words he uttered. (John xi. 50-52.)

Saul armed David with his own armor, but David put it off. The law armed Jesus with the flesh. By being made flesh he came under the law. He could not meet and overcome death until he had taken upon himself and put off again that flesh in which sin had been committed, and thus had condemned sin in the flesh. It was only by first

being overcome himself that he could overcome the great enemy. He must first die in order to abolish death. The law must first be satisfied by his death, which makes an end of sin, and then death has lost its power. "He that is dead is freed from sin." Then the Son of God, who took upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, in order to die the death due for the transgressions of his people, can no longer be holden of death, but comes forth victorious over him. "Death hath no more dominion over him."

All this must be shown in a figure by the action of David, while David must remain alive. So having put off Saul's armor, he chose five smooth stones from the valley. These stones represent an accursed death inflicted upon an Israelite. When a man became accursed he must be stoned to death. David threw one of these stones and brought down the giant. Jesus by his own death under the curse of the law, represented in this figure by the smooth (perfect) stones with which David armed himself, brought death down at his feet, and "destroyed him that had the power of death." He must first die, and then meet death with his own death, and thus overcome him so thoroughly that he can never make any one for whom Jesus died his captive any more. Jesus fought the battle so effectually in the valley of Elah, the bitter valley of death, that when he came forth out of that valley he even "carried captivity captive."

To make the figure more complete David took the champion's own sword to cut off his head. It was the sword of justice which death held over all who were under the curse of the law. But when Jesus through his own death "finished transgression, made an end of sin," and so laid death low, deprived of all his power, then that sword of justice was taken from death and turned against himself to bring his existence to an end. It was not simply absolute power, as abstractly considered, by which Jesus overcame death, but the power that justice and judgment give, for they are the habitation of God's throne, or the foundation of his power as against death. His people are not simply snatched from death, as a stronger man may take away a lawful captive from a weaker, but they are legally delivered. They are justified. No charge can ever be brought against them, for God has justified them. "It was Christ that died, yea, rather, is risen again, and is now at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for them." His intercession is felt to be effectual, for with the sword of justice justly taken from his conquered enemy he has destroyed him forever.

"The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel stood on a mountain on the other side, and there was a valley between them." "And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead they fled. And the men of Israel and of Judah arose, and shouted, and pursued the Philistines until thou come to the valley, and to the gates of Ekron." And when the Lord's people see the victory of Jesus over death they arise, and shout, and pursue their enemies, and rejoice in the victory that is given unto them through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When David went forth to fight the Philistine Saul inquired who he was. No one seemed to know. Upon his return Saul sent for him and asked him, "Whose son art thou, thou young man?" David with modesty and meekness answered, "I am the son of thy servant Jesse the Bethlehemite." When he had thus spoken to Saul, "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David; and he loved him as his own soul." "Then Jonathan and David made a covenant, because he loved him as his own soul. And Jonathan stripped himself of the robe that was upon him, and gave it to David, and his garments, even to his sword, and to his bow, and to his girdle."

What can this act of Jonathan signify unless it be the fact that all of the Lord's people in all dispensations do ever ascribe their robe of righteousness, and all their garments of salvation, and all their weapons of war and their strength, to Jesus? They recognize and testify that all they have belongs to him, and is his gift to them. This is as clearly declared by the holy men in the legal dispensation as by those now in the gospel day.

To the sight of men, Jonathan and Saul were alike as warriors. They fought with carnal weapons, and must both fall upon that same battlefield, overcome by the Philistines. That is the end of all who are under that dispensation. It is the end of all flesh. It is only by faith that a future is seen for Jonathan which is not seen for Saul, in which he and his seed shall be remembered in covenant love and salvation by David. Upon this earthly battlefield he and his fathers fight side by side with equal courage and zeal. David classes them as equals, and speaks of them with equal praise. "From the blood of the slain, from the fat of the mighty, the bow of Jonathan turned not back, and the sword of Saul returned not empty. Saul and Jonathan were lovely and pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided: they were swifter than eagles, they were stronger than lions." "How are the mighty fallen." That legal covenant could not furnish any weapon to those under it whereby they could overcome their enemies. "How are the weapons of war perished!"

For Jonathan, David had some words of love and tenderness which he had not for Saul. "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan. Very pleasant hast thou been unto me: thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." The love of the Lord's people to Jesus is wonderfully described in those few words. In all ages, in all dispensations, in all lands and among all people, it is the same. It is indeed wonderful, a "love that passeth knowledge."

"Jonathan spake good of David unto Saul his father," and defended him at the risk of his own life, and saved him out of his father's hand, who sought to kill even Jonathan his son because of his defense of David. In this Jonathan may well represent the prophets and holy men of old, who testified of Jesus, and declared his coming and kingdom, and who were hated by the carnal Israelites and their rulers, and

were persecuted and killed, because they spake good concerning the spiritual David who was to be the Ruler over Israel.

And Jonathan said to David, "And thou shalt not only while yet I live shew me the kindness of the Lord, that I die not: but also thou shalt not cut off thy kindness from my house forever: no, not when the Lord hath cut off the enemies of David every one from the face of the earth. So Jonathan made a covenant with the house of David, saying, Let the Lord even require it at the hand of David's enemies. And Jonathan caused David to swear again, because he loved him; for he loved him as his own soul."

This promise was not literally fulfilled to Jonathan, for he died with Saul in battle with the Philistines on Mount Gilboa. Nor were the promises which were given to the prophets to declare among the people literally fulfilled to them. They, with all the Lord's spiritual Israel under the old dispensation, "having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."—Heb. xi. 39, 40. The "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure," which was made with them, and which was all their salvation and all their desire, (2 Sam. xxiii. 5,) was not made to grow or be fulfilled in their flesh, nor in the sight of men. Its fulfillment was experienced then in the manifestation of Christ to them through the Spirit, who has now appeared in the flesh, and has openly fulfilled all that they spoke of him, revealing himself to his people among all nations by faith, and showing unto us that his people both under the old and the new dispensations are made perfect only in him.

As we see the heart of Jonathan turned toward his children far in the future, with a longing desire that David would show the kindness of the Lord to them, so we see the hearts of the fathers (the prophets) turned unto their children in the gospel dispensation, and rejoicing when it was made known unto them that the things they declared were to be fulfilled unto us. (Luke i. 17; 1 Peter i. 12.)

Our next inquiry will be concerning the seed of Jonathan.

AUGUST 18, 1899.

MEPHIBOSHETH AND DAVID

(2 Samuel ix.)

After David had become fully established upon the throne of Israel he said, "Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" Thus he remembered his covenant of love made with Jonathan to which he swear twice, (1 Sam. xx. 17,) that he would show the kindness of the Lord to his seed. And thus is shown in a figure, the covenant of love and mercy made by the dear Savior, the Son of David, with his people, and declared unto them by the prophets under that old dispensation, which was to be fulfilled "after those days" unto their children. This is that covenant which was confirmed unto the heirs of promise by the oath and promise of

God, that they might have that strong consolation which they shall so much need. (Heb. vi. 18.) After David was exalted upon the throne he could shew mercy. Jesus was exalted for that very purpose, that he might have mercy upon the heirs of promise. (Isa. xxx. 18; Acts v. 31.)

Jonathan was the son of a king, and himself, to all human appearance, the heir of the kingdom. He was undoubtedly of a kingly character and appearance, and David compared him to a lion for strength, and to an eagle for swiftness. Now when a search is made for his descendants what kind of men shall we expect to find? Certainly those of like kingly appearance, those who shall shew their noble descent. But no, this is not to be the case. When the son of Jonathan is discovered we see a poor man, destitute, lame on both his feet, helpless, living upon bounty, who describes himself with apparent fitness as "a dead dog" when he comes into the presence of David. His name has in it an element which signifies shame, but also shows that there is a contention against that shameful condition. He is found in the house of Machir, which signifies sold, or brought to ruin, and yet the name of Machir's father Ammiel intimates a kinship to God. The name of the place where he is found is Lodebar, which means "no pasture."

When Jesus, exalted upon the throne of his kingdom, remembers his covenant, "to perform the mercy promised unto our fathers," (Luke i. 72,) and calls for the heirs of promise, this is the way and manner of their appearance. Though of kinship to God, as every quickened sinner is, there is nothing in their appearance to indicate it. They are found in ruin, "sold under sin," in a desolate, pastureless land, and lame on both their feet. They have not only lost all of their former riches of righteousness, but they are in a helpless condition, so that they can never do any work to earn any more. When they are brought into the presence of the King they are lost in astonishment that he should look upon such as they, much more that he should shew such unexpected kindness. "What is thy servant, that thou shouldst look upon such a dead dog as I am?" This suits the feelings of a poor sinner well when the strange, surprising grace and mercy of the Lord are made known to him.

Let us consider this lameness. "He was five years old when the tidings came of Saul and Jonathan out of Jezreel, and his nurse took him up, and fled: and it came to pass, as she made haste to flee, that he fell, and became lame."—2 Sam. iv. 4. All of the Lord's people become lame. This is one thing by which they are designated. The accident to the child, Mephibosheth, may well be regarded as one of the figurative presentations in the Old Testament of that lameness and its cause. Jacob became lame while wrestling with the angel of God's presence in the law, by the angel's touch. He must become lame before he can receive the blessing. Mephibosheth became lame while fleeing in the arms of his nurse, when news came that the last battle was lost, and his father and grandfather were dead. If Mephibosheth represents

the Lord's people as they are brought to Jesus, he well shows in this how early in their experience of divine life they become lame on their feet, finding their utter inability to contend with the power of the law, or to flee from the destruction and desolation that must come upon all who are under its curse. It is always while under the care of the legal nurse that they become lame. The lameness is not partial, but complete. Whenever they undertake to stand on their feet, and to walk in their own strength, this lameness is manifested. He was lame on both his feet.

This is the condition of each one of the redeemed family when the covenant of promise is manifested to him, that he may be a witness that the salvation of God is not because of any works of righteousness which we have done, but all of his mercy and grace. Because of the everlasting covenant of grace they are now remembered in love, and are given a seat at the table of the King, there to eat bread all the days of their life.

Here are the gospel characters, and the gospel blessings. To sit continually at the King's table eating bread would seem to the natural view somewhat monotonous and tiresome, and especially to be compelled to sit there all the time because of that lameness. But the spiritual mind is instructed to regard this position as representing the child of God not only in the enjoyment of gospel promises, but in all the labors, cares, trials and afflictions of the gospel. Although seated at the table of the Lord's bounteous provisions of grace, it is not to represent him as idle, or as merely gratifying a carnal appetite, but as depending alone upon the grace and bounty of the Lord, being helpless in himself. It is only at this gospel table that any one can count afflictions a joy and trials most nourishing food. It is only here that the child of God feels that it is his meat and his drink to do the will of the Father. This table is not one where surfeiting and selfish ease are encouraged. While at this table every spiritual "Mephibosheth," though unable to take one step, or even to stand a moment on his feet in his own strength and righteousness, is walking in the order and ordinances of the gospel, and running in the gospel race. It is here we find the lame man who has been made by the grace of God to "leap like the hart," though still remaining lame. It is here that he who has a measure of Hezekiah's deep afflictions of soul can say with Hezekiah, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit."—Isa. xxxviii. 16. Here the children of God learn the healing and nourishing value of "the bread of tears," (Psalm lxxx. 5,) and experience the sweet and wholesome effect of "sorrowful meat." (Job vi. 7.) Here they are fed with the Lord's rod, and greatly comforted by the fruit of the vineyards given them from the wilderness of trouble. (Micah vii. 14; Hosea ii. 15.) On this table of our King are all the duties and privileges of the gospel, and these poor, lame Mephibosheths are eating most excellent food when walking in them. Not only the promises and privileges are food, but the exhortations and

reproofs also. Not only the Pascal Lamb is to be eaten, but with it always the bitter herbs.

While Mephibosheth was told that he should eat meat continually at David's table all the days of his life, the King also told him that all of the land of Saul his father should be restored unto him. In pursuance of this promise David put Ziba, Saul's servant, in charge of all that pertained to Saul and to all his house, and commanded him, with his fifteen sons and twenty servants, to till the land for Mephibosheth, "and bring in the fruits, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth, thy master's son, shall eat bread alway at my table."

What can be the need of this latter promise while the former is in force? If the lame man is to eat alway at David's table, why command the fruits of Saul's land to be brought to him that he may have food to eat? The gospel only shows the meaning of this, and makes it clear that the two promises are not in conflict with each other. The Lord's promise to his people not only covers the ground of all their spiritual needs, but also secures to them the supply for all their temporal needs as well, while they shall remain in the flesh. To them who are called into the kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ it is said, "All things are yours;" and again, Take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or Wherewithal shall we be clothed? for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Matt. vi. 25-34; 1 Cor. iii. 21.)

How clearly and sweetly does the promise of David to Mephibosheth, and his command to Ziba, set forth the abundant fullness and absolute sufficiency of the Lord's provisions for his people, in both temporal and spiritual things. No indolence or lack of care in regard to our worldly duties, and the responsibilities of our earthly relationships, are taught or encouraged; but the absolute trust in and reliance upon our God, which he enjoins upon those who are called by grace. It is not taught them that they shall neglect their houses or lands or wives or children, but that when the Lord calls them into his kingdom they are to learn of him, and not from the world, their duties in these respects, and that when he calls them to any work in his kingdom nothing is to stand in the way of that work. They are to go forward in the work to which he has called them, trusting and knowing that he will supply all the lack which their absence occasions; he, and not they, being the Judge, and "will supply all their need, according to his riches in glory, by Christ Jesus." It means that they are henceforth to live, not unto themselves, but unto him who died for them and rose again. (2 Cor. v.) It means that while engaged in the work whereunto God has called one, he has no need to take thought for the things of to-morrow to the hindrance of his work, but may rest in the promise of God that all that he needs of temporal things will be given him. While one is walking in the ordinances and commandments of God, the

fruits of the earth are his to the extent of his need, and cannot be withheld.

Mephibosheth and Ziba afterward had some kind of a contention about the inheritance, in which the former was probably to blame in thinking too much about the inheritance of Saul, and became slack in his ways during David's absence, on account of Absalom's rebellion. Ziba also appeared to be very zealous for David. When the king questioned Mephibosheth about his apparent backwardness, he tried to explain, but evidently was complaining of Ziba's conduct, and wanting something arranged differently. Then the king said, "Why speakest thou any more of thy matters? I have said, Thou and Ziba divide the land."—2 Sam. xix. 29. Then Mephibosheth seems to remember himself, and is willing that Ziba shall take all the land, "Forasmuch as my lord the king is come again in peace to his own house."

Too much anxiety about our worldly inheritance, houses and lands, and money, which is apt to come over us in the absence of our dear Lord, makes us trouble, but it brings us to see that that kind of inheritance we share with the world, and the tenants whom the Lord has appointed to work the land for his servants who sit at his table and eat bread there continually, will be sure to come off best in any conflict they may have with them. If we begin to try to collect the rents ourselves, and call upon Ziba for the fruits, we shall fail, and fall short, and get into trouble. Better let the Lord do the collecting for us. It is a good deal better than the result of our own undertaking, for that is merely that we and Ziba divide the land, and then our part of the land must remain uncultivated.

But when the Lord again returns, we can easily give up trying to make provisions for the flesh, but do what our hands find to do, being diligent in business, but seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness. So again we sit in humility and contentment at the table of our King, eating our bread with gladness, and trusting in him for everything. "So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet."

So that is the sad but sweet story to the last, "lame on both his feet." By faith he has leaped for joy, and has run victoriously in the gospel race, but lame he is still; still held down by infirmities. By faith he has gone forth in joy, and been led forth in peace, while the trees clapped their hands before him, and has joined with the great multitude of the redeemed in songs of praise; but he is still in the bondage of corruption, longing to be delivered, unable to do the good that he would, because lame on both his feet. But how sweet it is when he remembers that thus he is kept at this table, unable to get away from it, as he would do if his lame feet were whole; also how sweet to remember that thus he is made to keep in view the wonderful works of his King, who has done all for him, and prepared all blessings for him, and has placed him where he shall ever have in view those wonderful works, and feast upon the precious things "which God has prepared for all them that love him."

SEPTEMBER, 1899.

THE COMMON SALVATION

This expression is used by Jude, and does not occur elsewhere in the Scriptures. This inspired writer addresses his epistle "to them that are sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called." To them he says, "Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." There is but one salvation that can be called common, that is, common to all the sanctified, or elect, of God, and that is the salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ, that salvation from sin and death unto eternal life, which is the theme of all the inspired writers. That this is that salvation which the apostle designates as "the common salvation," is clearly evident by the reason which he gives for the necessity of writing to them about it.

"The faith which was once delivered unto the saints," is not that grace of faith which "is the fruit of the Spirit," but that doctrine and order of the gospel in which the salvation of God is made known to the saints in the world. This is that "mystery which hath been hid from ages and generations, but now is made manifest unto his saints," and this mystery "is Christ in them the hope of glory." (Eph. iii. 5; Col. i. 26, 27.) This doctrine of salvation by grace, and the order of the gospel, was delivered unto the saints on the day of Pentecost, when the gospel church was established. The apostles were charged with the authority to teach it to the saints, and to set all the commands of Jesus concerning the church in order, as judges sitting upon thrones, to judge the twelve tribes of Israel. All this gospel system is made known to the faith of God's people. It is not understood by the natural mind, but by an understanding especially given for this purpose. (1 John v. 20; Eph. i. 17-23.) This doctrine of God is spoken of as "the faith of the gospel." Paul uses the word faith in this sense, as a system of faith, in Romans i. 5; xvi. 26; Gal. i. 23, and in other places. This faith, or doctrine, in which the eternal salvation of the saints is declared and made manifest in the world, is of the utmost importance and value to the saints. It is more than all the world to them. It sets forth and declares "the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory."—1 Cor. ii. 7. It declares the ways and wisdom of God in salvation, as contrasted with the ways and wisdom of men. It was once delivered unto the saints in the morning of the gospel dispensation, and it is needful that they earnestly contend for it, for the whole world, and all the influences of the world, are opposed to it.

I have said that there is no other salvation which is common, either to all men naturally or to the saints. Natural salvation, as salvation from wounds or death in battle, from shipwreck, from loss or destruction by earthquake, fire, flood or disease, from misfortune or affliction of any kind, cannot be called a common salvation, for all are not saved from these things. Nor can that salvation of the Lord's people from

error, from a fleshly walk and the loss or death that results from it, from stripes on account of transgression, which may be called a time salvation, be called common, for all are not saved in this sense. Some do walk after the flesh and die; some do transgress, and are visited with the rod. This liability to wander from the right way, and yield to temptation in some of its many forms, and so suffer, is referred to by all the apostles, and is made the subject of faithful, earnest and tender admonition and exhortation. But some do yield to the temptation for a time, and suffer the sad consequences. There is an experience of the weakness of the flesh on the part of all of the saints in some measure, so that every one who is received is scourged and chastised. (Heb. xii. 6.) All must learn that they are dependent entirely upon the care and grace of God for the orderly walk which shall secure to them this time salvation, so that they shall not depend upon themselves, as Peter did, but upon the Lord. They must learn that "we have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead." Some, through the faithful labors of brethren, are saved from death. (James v. 19, 20.) Ministers, by faithful labor in the gospel, save themselves and them that hear them, from false doctrine and practice. (1 Tim. iv. 16.) All this is the work of grace. But some are left to see more fully, and experience more deeply, the corruption, depravity and untrustworthiness of the flesh, even going so far in an ungodly walk that they are "delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus."

All for whom Jesus died are saved with an everlasting salvation, and shall finally be restored from all their wanderings, healed from all their backslidings, and brought home to glory, to the praise of the riches of God's grace. This everlasting salvation is common to all those who are sanctified, set apart, chosen, by God the Father. These who are the elect are preserved or saved in Jesus Christ, as the eight souls were saved in the ark. In him they were buried by baptism into death, and so satisfied the law. In him they were raised up from death, and so death has no more dominion over them. In God's own appointed time each one of them is called by grace to a knowledge of this salvation, which is wrought in them.

A common inheritance, or an inheritance in common, is one in which each heir has an undivided part of the whole. It cannot be divided; it all belongs to each one. It may be illustrated by the light in a room full of people; the whole light belongs to each one in the room. No one can have a right to more than another, though one may be in a condition to enjoy more than another. So with this salvation, each one of those who are called has a right to all of it. It is the common salvation, common to the whole family of God. They are joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ to this inheritance, and shall finally, all of them, be conformed to his image, and enter upon the full realization of this common inheritance in glory.

But the enjoyment of this common light, this common salvation, while here in the flesh, is more in some than in others. To enjoy an inheritance which cannot be divided the heirs must be as one, must be of one mind and one soul. And so it is with the Lord's people when they are in the Spirit. Then they dwell together in unity, the unity of the Spirit, and find how good and how pleasant it is. (Psalm cxxxiii.) But when the flesh prevails in the case of any, and they strive to walk by sight instead of faith, then their right to that salvation is not fully enjoyed. Sometimes their birthright is sold for some fleshly good, and they are deprived for a season of the light and comfort. But they cannot dispose of their inheritance, though they suffer loss in their daily experience. It was needful for them, therefore, that the apostle should exhort them to contend earnestly in their daily life, in their walk and conversation, for that faith, that doctrine and order of the gospel church, unto the obedience of which they have been called, and that they attend with care to all that pertains to the church of the living God, seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, above all worldly things. The grace which brought them salvation taught them all this proper gospel walk. (Titus ii. 11, 12.)

The salvation which is eternal, and the salvations of various kinds which are experienced by the saints in time, bear the same relation to each other which the sun in the heavens and his beams upon the earth bear to each other. We know nothing of the Sun till his light falls upon us; we know nothing of Jesus, who is our salvation, and the Sun of Righteousness to us, till his healing beams are felt in our souls. "In thy light shall we see light." It is by and in our daily experience that we learn all that we can know here in time of our eternal salvation. In every experience of suffering, of tribulation, of stripes, and of salvation from these evils, we learn more of this salvation, and only in tribulation do we learn anything concerning it. Whatever Jesus tells us is told us in the darkness, but we speak it in the light. Jesus is our salvation here in time, and to eternal days.

March, 1900.

THOUGHTS IN SICKNESS

After twenty-six days of sickness I am just able to sit up a little. Compared with many, my sufferings have not been long nor severe. It is of some exercises of mind under them that I wish to write a little to the readers of the "Signs," to whom I have communicated freely for thirty-six years. I know I can tell but little of what I have experienced, but I write to those of like precious faith, who will understand more than I can tell.

After seventeen days of painful suffering a surgical operation was performed for an erysipelas swelling in the neck. There was relief, but with great weakness. Until the operation there had appeared no favorable prospect, but when the surgeon had done his work a cure

seemed assured. My quiet of mind had continued, but there was a feeling of unspeakable solemnity as I appeared to be in the presence of the Lord, in a special sense, and great were the searchings of heart that I experienced. Every apparent ground of my hope seemed to be subjected to great searchings, and to almost disappear, yet my hope remained. My heart was filled with the constant prayer, "O God, be merciful to me." When there was hope of recovery, I felt a gladness with my quietude, and then the searchings became deeper and sterner, for I feared my gladness was only natural, and not true thankfulness to the Lord, nor submission to his will. Do I really desire and seek the glory of God? This was the burden of my anxious inquiry.

After preparing, the surgeon said, "Now I am going to hurt you." My strength to bear would have been the strength of an infant, but the greater strength was at hand. When his work was done I said, "How can you bear it, doctor?" "It is you that bear it," he replied, "not I; I would not have borne it so well." "Not that," I said, "I mean how can you bear to see the suffering in the faces of those you must hurt daily and hourly, to do them good?" All that night I seemed to see the great Physician, the dear Savior, bending over his dear ones, with his tender, pitying, but firm expression, hurting them deeply, even to the piercing of their hearts, and causing them to feel the pains of death, thus bringing them to know the fellowship of his sufferings, that they may know the fellowship of his joy.

"For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart." The tribe of Reuben dwelt on the opposite side of Jordan from Canaan, but fought with the tribes that had their inheritance in Canaan. So in a sense we dwell in the world, for flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom of God, but we fight the fight of faith in the gospel land. This is the division of Reuben, the division between the flesh and the Spirit, which are contrary the one to the other, and this causes the Lord's people to have such great thoughts and searchings of heart. (Judges v. 15, 16.)

While thus in the felt presence of the great Searcher of hearts, in my pain and weakness of body, I was shown more clearly than ever before how far short I have come in everything I have thought or said or done, how far short of that holiness which God justly requires. My best works have been contaminated by my nature's vileness, so that I can see no merit of my own in them. If accepted, it was to the wonder and praise of grace. I was baptized in the fellowship of the church. It was a privilege and blessing unspeakable, but my own part was all so full of self and sin I wondered the saints could have me with them. I remember the sweet and solemn occasion with thankfulness for the unspeakable grace. I have preached the gospel sometimes, I am sure, and have felt great sweetness and comfort in it. But how could it be that the Lord would call me to such a holy work, or allow me to enter upon it? I never could understand it. And so much of vile self in all

my attempts to preach, so much of vanity, so much of seeking great things for myself. I loathe myself as I think of it now, and feel shame and pain before God. What can I say to him but the same old cry, "God be merciful to me, a sinner"? And I am asking now, Am I sincere even in that? Yet my hope remains, and my mind is held quiet. How is this?

Have I denied myself? Have I crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts? Oh, how I have tried to think that I have. Sometimes it has seemed that I have tried to deny myself, and that I have succeeded. But now in the felt presence of God, and seeing the end of this life apparently not far away, I am looking, it seems in vain, for true self-denial in my life and walk. I look over all that I could call self-denial, and I find the thought of self-benefit is in it all. If I have denied myself of any one thing it has been with the thought of a greater good to myself. Denied the lesser, lower, baser, it may be, for the more exalted, nobler, purer, but still for self. What do I know of denying self and taking up my cross? My own self-righteous reasoning and exaltation of self will not avail me here, for the Lord is searching me, and the Lord's line and plummit are not swerved a hair's breadth by my thoughts of my own works.

But here the Lord breaks in upon my soul with a precious revelation, a new revelation, of Christ as my righteousness, as the only doer of good works, for me and for every redeemed soul. Christ denied himself, and he is the only one under heaven who ever did; therefore his name "is the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." A man cannot by his own will deny that same will. "A house divided against itself cannot stand." A man cannot of himself deny himself. His own will cannot lead to works contrary to that will, therefore he cannot of his own will do works of righteousness. It must be by another will, of another nature, that his own will is denied. Only one ever lived on earth who could and did deny himself, and he not by his own will as a man, though that will was pure, for he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, but by his Father's will which he came in the flesh to do. It was the Father's will wrought in the Son. This turned him away from "all created good," from seeking gratification of his needs as a man, and of his pure and right earthly desires, and caused him to deny himself of his just rights, and from claiming the true judgment given in his favor by Pilate, and made him yield to unjust oppression when he could have had power to resist it, and allow himself to be numbered with the transgressors, and to die an accursed death. This all was not according to his will as a man, but was according to the Father's will, to fulfill in and through the Son the Father's eternal purpose. That will of the Father by which the dear Son denied himself, is the only will by which any man can ever deny himself, take up his cross and follow Jesus.

Then how sharply came to my waiting, anxious soul the question, "Where is the evidence that this will has ever been wrought in you?

How does it appear that you have ever experienced this work of self-denial? that you have ever truly denied yourself?" But I remembered that it is said of the Lord's people by an inspired apostle, "We have the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth the dead." I have felt this sentence of death in myself. By this I have been prevented from trusting in myself. I have sought in vain to find any good thing dwelling in me, that is, in my flesh. I have seen and felt a blight upon all earthly things for myself, so that I could not base any substantial hope of happiness upon them. Whenever true and real comfort has come to me it has been, not because of any good discovered in myself, nor because of any merit in anything done by me, but because of some blessed revelation of Jesus to my soul; because of some sweet truth brought to my mind, some precious word of promise dropped into my heart, which made me forget myself and my depravity for the time, and rejoice in the Lord, and feel strong in him, "and in the power of his might." It was always God's work, not mine, that made me rejoice. But before long a sense of my unworthiness has often made me question how these blessed things could be mine, until again they were revealed by his own glorious power, and again sealed unto me as mine.

I am writing in bed, as I am able, from time to time, but I can tell only a little of what passes in my mind. The church of God has been fair and beautiful to me, and her work and service have been mostly a delight, though I can truly say I have never felt worthy to have a part in it, but sometimes so unworthy and unfit as to go to the work greatly burdened and oppressed. I have seen so much of my own vain and sinful self in my work that I have been kept much in the dark, and have traveled in low grounds of sorrow. In the meetings of the saints, where I dearly love to be, how my comfort has been marred by my worldliness of mind, and the vanity of my thoughts. Yet I have loved the meetings well, though falling so far short of their best goodness because of my carnality of mind. Preaching has always been a solemn work to me, and my levity of nature has been mostly hushed when trying to preach. But still so much of self, of vanity, of worldly thoughts, would crowd in view that I have often become sick of self and almost weary of the work. Vexation of mind at annoyances of the moment, and at my vain efforts to seek suitable expression, and impatience because I cannot preach better, because I cannot preach as well as my brethren, though at the same time inwardly glad that they can preach better than I. But I must confess with thankfulness that sometimes I am happy as a little child while made to forget myself and remember only the Lord's name, and his hungry poor while preaching the gospel of his grace. I love to hear the gospel preached, and yet often some tone or manner of the preacher will attract my attention away from the truth he proclaims, and oftener some frivolous thought in my own vain mind.

What contradictions! what conflicts! what contrariness between flesh and Spirit, and all most apparent in the holiest places and work. How often I say, "Is there any Spirit of Christ in me? If not, I am none of his." I remember the wormwood and the gall of such experiences, and recall to mind that my soul is humbled within me at the thought of those distressing views of my vain self, therefore I am comforted and have hope. (Lam. iii. 19-21.) Have I ever received any comfort which appeared to me as a reward for any act of obedience of mine? So far from it that the very thought is revolting to my soul. In my experience every token of God's love and favor, and he has given me many, notwithstanding my unworthiness, every act of obedience, and every sweet comfort and assurance of hope, have been alike from God through rich and abounding grace in Christ, and my thanksgivings have abounded to his dear name as much for the gift of an obedient spirit and walk as for the precious words that have shown my sins forgiven.

How much I have sown to the flesh, in thought and word and deed, and as must necessarily follow, I have of the flesh reaped corruption. Why has the Lord made me to feel the bitterness of sin instead of leaving me dead in it, or allowing me to rest in carnal security? Why has he in mercy restored my soul? Why has he given me repentance unto life, and the feeling of the Publican's prayer in my heart? Why has he brought me in spirit to his dear feet, and favored me to feel his wonderful love in my soul? Why has he given me this submission to his will at this time, so contrary to my natural disposition? I cannot tell, only that it is for some wise and gracious purpose of his own. But what wonderful love and mercy and grace to poor, unworthy me. If he shall restore me to a measure of health and strength so that I may stand before his people again, I desire and pray that I may preach Christ, and only Christ, wasting no time or words on useless things; that I may have no divided mind, but a mind single to the glory of God, and to the good of his hungry poor.

Only by the Spirit of Christ working in me mightily can I deny myself. It is the cutting off of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, so that we have no confidence in the flesh. To deny not only the carnal, gross appetite, the lustful desire, the anger and hatred and envy that are clamoring for expression, but also the most noble and exalted impulses of our human nature; to deny not only the claims of worldly ambition, but also our just rights, and allow ourselves to be taken from judgment, as Jesus did, and to appear vile in the sight of men, if need be; to deny not only the cruel impulse to hurt another by the "words that are spears and arrows," but also to deny the generous impulse to speak kindly, flesh-pleasing words, when only self, not truth, would be favored by them; to please not ourselves, but others; to turn the other cheek to the smiter; to give the cloak also; to turn not away from him that would borrow of us. But this no man can do; no, all these things are among those that are impossible with

men; but there are no impossibilities with God; he can do all things, but he does them in his own way.

This is dying daily; this is denying self. As we come before God in the Spirit, whether in immediate prospect of the great change or not, how he removes our trust in a moment from all our own works, from all fleshly goodness, from all created things, and shows us how far our trust has been in the Lord. Then "we are open and naked before him with whom we have to do."

O, the sharp pain of that surgeon's knife, as in his tender but firm hand it cut down through the swollen and hardened flesh. But it reached and brought out that poisonous mass of corruption that had gathered and secreted itself there, near the springs of life, and made way for a permanent cure. O, the piercing stroke of the word of God, sharper than surgeon's knife, as it has divided between soul and Spirit, showing the soul ever cleaving to the dust (Psalm cxix. 25), until quickened by the Spirit, according to the Lord's word, that we may run in the way of his commands. Did we think there was goodness in the flesh? that piercing word has shown us our delusion; it is corrupt. But the Lord will bring health and cure. Here is the perishing of the outer man day by day; here the bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus. No comfort to the flesh in this experience except the sweet hope of the great change that shall come to us in the resurrection, when we shall be conformed to the image of Jesus. In this hope the flesh of Jesus rested; in this hope we rest. (Psalm xvi. 9.) In this denying of self and following Jesus we find no earthly pillow for the head, no rest for the flesh. O, the pain of this daily crucifixion, this cutting off of all trust in the flesh. O, the hurt of this piercing word! But through it all comes the promise, and the experience by faith, of true healing; through the suffering comes the unspeakable fragrance and glorious beauty of the life of Jesus made manifest even in our mortal body. This is our true life, the life that we now live in the flesh, by the faith of the Son of God. Now, through this painful experience of the circumcision of Christ, we know what it is to deny ourselves. We follow Christ in suffering in the flesh, but also, blessedly, we follow him in spiritual life and holy joy. His works are now our works; he works them in us to will and to do of his good pleasure. And by his rich grace this inward work is wrought out in our life here. From this sorrowing, yet rejoicing, inward life of faith come all the sweet amenities of the social life of the saints on earth; brethren dwelling together in unity; caring for each other; thinking of each other's welfare; "thinking not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others;" denying one's self for other's good; meeting together with love and joy; forbearing one another in love, forgiving one another; using the mantle of charity for each other's faults; tenderly washing one another's feet. Blessed family of God; blessed people that are in such a case. Glorious city of God, "beautiful for situation, the joy of

the whole earth." There let me dwell in their fellowship while I remain on earth, not in crowded temples made with hands, but where the twos and threes are gathered together in Jesus' name, who "shall speak of the glory of his kingdom and talk of his power."

What the Spirit quickens or moves me to do, though done in the weakness of the flesh, is accepted of God; it is a work of faith. Grace wrought in us the holy desire, the holy will; and grace has enabled us to work it out with fear and trembling. We mourn for the weakness of the flesh, but in that weakness the strength of Jesus is made perfect, and as his power rests upon us we are strong. In our felt weakness is our strength. Soon all the fancied strength and all the real weakness of the flesh shall be gone in a moment, and we shall appear with Christ, who is our life, in glory.

I have written in great weakness of body. My love to all the dear brethren. I have now been more than four weeks sick. I hope in a few days, if the Lord will, to go out again, and to meet with brethren at our association part of the time.

MAY 25, 1900.

WONDERS DONE BY FAITH

I awoke from troubled sleep in the midst of most peculiar and terrible weakness. I was not conscious of any affright, as though, like Job, I had been scared through dreams, and terrified through visions; but as I awoke my whole life seemed to lie spread out before me as in the sight of God, and in it all I saw nothing but sin and evil, with not one redeeming, meritorious feature. I was as one brought before his king, in whose service he had been specially engaged in important matters of trust, and whom he had professed to love and honor, charged with unworthy motives and traitorous acts, which he could not deny, and yet who was himself the most utterly surprised by his own guilt, having been unconscious of any crime, or even of any evil intent, but on the contrary who had thought he loved his king so much that he would have given his life in his service.

This but imperfectly intimates the kind of weakness which possessed my soul as I awoke that Sunday morning. It is impossible for me to describe the exercises of my mind in that condition; the deep sinking down of my soul under the sense of being myself what I most loathe, and of falling infinitely below what I most love and revere; the surprise at recognizing in myself the crimes I hate, and of which I was before unconscious, and of standing under them before the Lord without defense; the sore hurt of the wounds that sin has made, and of the fiery darts of Satan, felt through all my being; the panting of my soul after God, and the hopeless cry unto him even in the shudder and tremble of death; the gathering, as it were, before me of all the elements of trouble and weakness, and all the bitter touches and tastes of sorrow that I had felt, and awaiting in the dull amazement of grief the coming of that deeper night whose darkness must soon be upon me.

How long this feeling lasted I do not know; there is no measure of time in this condition. It seemed but a moment when out of the very darkness and trouble of my soul these words seemed to come forth most mysteriously, and to place themselves before my wondering sight: "OUT OF WEAKNESS WERE MADE STRONG." It was indeed amazing. I cannot describe the wonderful appearance of the words, my surprise that they should appear, nor their transforming power. They were inexpressibly beautiful to me, and their sweetness filled my soul with holy and wondering delight. I thought of Paul when that terrible night of sorrow and pain was lighted up by the dear Savior's words, "My grace is sufficient for thee."

These words, "Out of weakness were made strong," were my text that day, but I could tell only a little of what they were to me. I had nothing to do with bringing them to my mind, nor in producing the wonderful change which they wrought in my feelings. In a moment light seemed to shine out of the very darkness I had experienced, and I felt strong in the sense in which I had been weak before. I was not strong in myself, no stronger in myself than before, but "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." The strength seemed to appear out of that very weakness which had been so distressing. I had been made to feel, as I had many times before, my weakness before the Lord, being absolutely without defense in myself against the charges of sin and iniquity, and so had been brought to the end of the earth, to the end of earthly strength, when through these precious words Jesus appeared as my defense, and I was at once strong in him. He had satisfied the claim of the law, and removed it from me forever, and so in him I had "righteousness and strength." I did not make myself strong, but out of weakness was made strong, and yet it was the work of faith.

This precious sentence occurs in the midst of a rich cluster of such sentences, each giving examples of wonderful things done by faith. It had not been especially familiar to me above the other sentences, yet now it came by itself alone, as though taken out from among the others and handed to me for mine. This experience, then, of the love and grace of God, in making me strong in him, was to be shown to me as my own work by faith; for the apostle is telling of works done by the faith of the people of God, to their own wonder and amazement. The works of faith which they are thus said to have done, appear to themselves as far from being their own work as would be the opening of their eyes if they had been born blind, or as is the rising of the sun upon us in the morning.

It is of the peculiar character and mysterious work of faith that the apostle is speaking in all this connection. He points to examples and witnesses of the experience of faith as "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." Those things which God has provided for his people cannot be seen by the natural eye nor understood by the natural mind, as it is written, "Eye hath not

seen, our ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for those that love him: but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit."—1 Cor. ii. 9. These heavenly things are revealed to faith. (Romans i. 17.) It is thus that the faith which is the substance of things hoped for, is also the evidence of those same things which are not seen by the natural sight. Being thus hidden from the wise and prudent, from the natural wisdom and understanding of men, and revealed only to babes; these gospel things can only be understandingly talked about by those babes, who have mutual faith. (Matt. xi. 25.)

In all these examples which the apostle has given to illustrate the meaning and power of faith, things which are impossible with men, but which are experienced by them, are said to be their own work by faith. Thus Enoch's translation that he should not see death, was the work of God, yet the apostle says that by faith he was translated. So, "By faith women received their dead raised to life again." These women did nothing by which they recovered their children from death, but the faith which God gave them, and Enoch, and all that great cloud of witnesses, laid hold upon the purposes and power of God, and caused them to see and believe and earnestly desire and pray for what the Lord purposed to do. So Jesus said to the sorely afflicted father, who besought him to heal his son, "Believest thou that I can do this? All things are possible to him that believeth." The belief has no effect upon the work, no power to produce the desired result. The purpose and work of God are not caused by the belief, but the belief is because of God's purpose and work. The women who received their dead raised to life again, and the father who received his restored son, from the hand of Jesus, did nothing to bring to themselves such unspeakable blessings, yet they were not passive in the work as a piece of wood or stone is passive under the hand of the workman. They were mightily wrought upon by the unseen power of faith. That faith given to them had power to penetrate into the mysterious purposes of God, to discover his will, to know what he had determined to do, and thus that faith, as the evidence of things not seen, caused them to believe and to pray. It was such faith that caused Elijah to pray earnestly that it might not rain, a thing he could not have desired as a man, but which he earnestly desired when it was revealed to his faith as the purpose of God to bring this judgment upon his rebellious people. He had nothing to do in causing the rain to be withheld, nor afterward in causing it to be sent upon the earth; yet he was not passive under the power of that faith to which was opened up the things of God, but urgently moved to pray for what God had designed to do. The apostle says that by faith Daniel stopped the mouths of lions, and by faith the Hebrew children quenched the violence of fire. But Daniel said the Lord sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, and the heathen king recognized the power of God in saving those whom he had commanded to be thrown into the fiery furnace from being burned by the fire.

GREATER WORKS

At this point I will, following out the same subject, refer to the words of the dear Savior in John xiv. 12: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." I have many times been asked for my understanding of this declaration, and have written briefly concerning it in private letters, and once or twice for publication. I think they are to be understood in the light of these examples of the character and work of faith referred to by Paul in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews.

Many have tried to discover and explain how believers in Jesus can do such works as he did, and especially how they can do greater works than he did. Those who esteem the power of men as prominent and paramount in the work of salvation will readily indorse the sentiment that Jesus so started the work of salvation, and so laid out his plan, and so instructed his disciples, that they should continually advance in power and effectiveness, and so attain unto results far beyond what Jesus attained unto while here. They will illustrate this view by referring to any great enterprise in worldly business, in which the one who begins and establishes the business is far outstripped by those who succeed him in prosecuting it, as each successive generation improves upon the implements, methods and power. So I heard a preacher say, years ago, "The least christian now can save more souls than Jesus did when on earth, for he only began the work, and laid out the plans, which have been improving and growing ever since."

This, of course, was consistent with the doctrine that Jesus began the work of salvation, and left it for his followers to carry on. Those who regard the subject in this way do not know anything of a salvation begun and finished by Jesus, and revealed unto his people by his holy Spirit in this gospel dispensation. But sometimes we see those who do know the gospel of God's grace, trying to explain how his people do the same kind of works that Jesus did while he was here in the flesh, and how also they do even greater works than he did.

But the dear Savior did not say that those who believed on him should do *such* works as he did while he was in the flesh; neither did he say that they should do greater works than he did. A comparison of men and their works with Jesus and his works, in this sense of being less or greater, is never made by him or his apostles. He speaks of himself being greater than Solomon and Jonah, but only as the reality is greater than the type. He does not compare his works with men's works, nor himself with men, as in the sight and estimation of God, for no man but himself is ever regarded with favor by the Father, nor can appear commended before him; nor are the works of any man but Jesus ever accepted and approved by the Father. All that appear before God at any time must appear in the name of Jesus, and all that ever are accepted of the Father are accepted with Jesus, and in

his perfect, finished work. All who come with any works but his to plead, are pronounced workers of iniquity.

Jesus said of him who believed on him that he should do the works that he did; not works like them, but the very same works. He gave his apostles power to do miracles, but those are not the works he is speaking of here. That was a special power which he gave personally to the apostles. Also there were signs that should follow them that believed upon the preaching of the apostles, which were fulfilled, and are still fulfilled in a spiritual sense. It is to be remembered that in the name of Jesus all those wonders were to be done, and in that name they are still done as signs. But that name must be, not upon the lips, but in the heart; and then the power of it will be manifest. It is not the will of the man that is wrought by the power of this name, for by that will he would, like Simon, desire the power for his own gratification; but it is the will of Jesus that is wrought by the power of his name.

The work that Jesus did, and the work that the believer did, were not two similar works, but the same work, as the work of God in closing the lions' mouths, and the work of Daniel, who "by faith stopped the mouths of lions," was the same work. It was only upon the believer that Jesus did works of healing. In one place he could do no mighty works because of their unbelief. If some should think that in some sense the faith, and the belief which results from faith, are ours to exercise according to our will, then let him consider why only two since the world began have gone from this world without dying. Surely if faith can be exercised at the will of any man, many, very many, would have been translated like Enoch, that they should not see death. By faith the eyes of the blind were opened, the ears of the deaf were unstopped, the long sick were healed in a moment, the touch of the hem of Jesus' garment caused the issue of blood to be staunched in an instant, and all the wonderful works of Jesus were experienced by the poor and needy. It was his work in their behalf, and it was also their work by faith. He ascribes the power and salvation to their faith. "Thy faith hath saved thee," yet he gave that same faith. "He is the author and the finisher of our faith."

In the case of the dead raised to life, the faith was not in the dead, but in those who mourned their death, and who received them raised to life again. Martha must acknowledge that she believed, before Lazarus could be raised. The poor souls who sought the healing power of Jesus did not know of that great riches of faith in them until Jesus told them of it, and showed them its fruit; and it is the same today. The poor lepers who are, in their soul's experience, at Jesus' feet, acknowledging his power, and beseeching his mercy to heal them, do not know that the blessed faith of the Son of God is in them. If they had not that faith they would not, could not, mourn on account of their sins, nor pray for mercy and healing. They may seem to hear Jesus say, "I am not sent to you," yet they will worship

him, and say, "Lord, help me." They may seem to hear him say, "It is not meet to take the children's bread and give it to dogs," and they will say, That is just what I am, "But the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from the master's table. I crave a crumb, and that is all I ask." Faith was there all the time, urgent, persistent, never-failing faith, and the work is done. Jesus did the work, and the poor, believing soul has done it also by that faith which is the gift of God.

Jesus did not say, "He that believeth on me shall do greater works than I can do," but greater works than these that I am doing now. He was still in the flesh, and under the law. The works that he did then were all works that could be seen by men. They were great and wonderful, but were only figurative of the greater spiritual works which he must do before he could go unto his Father. He must die because of the sins of his people, and thus fulfill the law and destroy death; he must rise from the dead and show his risen body to witnesses chosen before, and then ascend up on high, carrying captivity captive. Then when he went unto the Father he would send forth his light and his truth, and lead his people to his holy habitation, the church of the living God. When he went unto his Father then would all his work of salvation be made manifest in his people; and how much greater are these works in bringing his people to a knowledge of himself than the works he did while in the flesh for the healing and comfort of the bodies of his people, only they who have experienced them can know.

To raise one to life again, who had died, is a great work, but how much greater the work when death itself is destroyed, and they who were under its dominion are raised up to die no more. To command the winds and waters to be still, and cause a great calm on the sea that was in terrible commotion, was the work of an infinite God, but it is a greater work to cause peace and quiet in the soul that has been in trouble on account of the storms of wrath against sin. To open the eyes of one that was born blind, and to unstop the deaf ears, are great works, but to open the eyes of a poor sinner spiritually, and unstop his ears, so that he can see the glorious works of salvation for himself, and hear the voice of Jesus declare his sins forgiven, are infinitely greater works, greater as eternity is greater than this short life in time, and higher as the heavens are higher than the earth.

All these greater works of Jesus in his gospel, are works which his people do by faith. His works are their works. By faith in his name the lame walk and the lepers are cleansed. By faith they destroy death and overcome the world. By faith they resist the devil, and overcome the wicked one. By faith they quench his fiery darts, and gain the victory through the name of Jesus.

Those who are in the habit of thinking of the Lord's people as doing works in their own name or as distinct from Jesus must remember that in all that pertains to salvation they are one with him, as he became one with them in bearing their sins and suffering in the flesh.

The mystery which was hid from the former ages and dispensations, but is now made manifest unto the saints in the gospel day, "Is Christ in them the hope of glory." It is his power within them by which they work. He works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. His Spirit works in them mightily when he will accomplish his will in them. Our works are not wrought by us and then submitted to him for judgment, but all our works that are acceptable are wrought in him. All other works are works of the flesh, dead works, works of iniquity; and in the judgment which is upon us when Jesus appears those works are condemned. We are condemned for fleshly works, and the fire of God's word burns them up; but we are not praised or rewarded *for* spiritual works, although there is a sweet reward felt in our souls *in* them, for to Jesus the praise is due for every good work. By his power and grace, and in his holy name alone, could we ever possibly do good works; therefore to him the thanks abound for them. But always our God is our exceeding great reward, sweetly felt when we are enabled to walk in the light of his countenance, but known and felt to be such also when we walk in darkness and have no light.

What a blessed thing it is to feel this holy oneness with Jesus; to feel that we are accepted *with* him and *in* him; to feel from time to time the victory given unto us over every enemy through his dear and blessed name; to feel that we are new creatures to him, not by any work or power of our own, but "the workmanship of God, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

How blessed and full of delight are these "greater works" of the gospel which are now made manifest to our faith, and become ours by faith, to be done by us as the need for them comes upon us, *because Jesus went unto his Father.* It is a risen and glorified Savior who dwells in the believer, working in him "all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power." Therefore "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." The "greater works" of Jesus are not known by the natural man, who could see the works he did while here in the flesh, but they are only known as they are manifested in and through poor sinners redeemed by his precious blood, and given faith in his name, by which his power and salvation become experimentally theirs. They are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed to these babes. It is only by faith, and not by natural sight or wisdom, that these babes see and know these greater works, and that they know Jesus who wrought them, though he dwells in them and walks in them, and will make his strength perfect in their weakness. It is only as flesh and heart faileth them from time to time, that they are fully prepared to know and experience that the Lord

is the strength of their heart, and their portion forever. (Psalm lxxiii. 26.)

JUNE 16, 1900.

NO GOOD THING IN THE FLESH

The experience of a child of God is a wonderful mystery. To himself it appears full of contradictions, and therefore the expression of that experience appears as foolishness to the natural mind, and so do the Scriptures which teach that peculiar experience of the Lord's "peculiar people."

The first thing experienced by one who is taught of the Lord is that he is vile, and that he can do nothing good in the sight of God. He will strive and strive again to attain unto some goodness, and may be a long time in learning the truth that he can do no good thing; but the result of all his efforts will be that all his goodness, like the flower of the field, withers away. He may not for a long time know that it is because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon him that the flower of his goodness withers, but it is true. The blowing of this heavenly wind has made him feel the goodness of the flesh withering like the grass, but it also proves him to have been born of the Spirit. (Isa. xl. 6-8; 1 Peter i. 24, 25; John iii. 8.) When the blessed Interpreter comes to this poor soul as he thus draws near to the grave, in his sorrow and desolation, and his life to the destroyers, and shows unto him his uprightness, shows to him that Jesus is his righteousness and salvation, then he rejoices like a child, in the surprising favor of God, who has found for him a ransom, and has delivered him from going down into the pit. (Job xxxiii. 14-30.) In this joyous season of spiritual childhood there is little or no knowledge of doctrine. He is apt to regard himself as so changed by the wonderful grace that has brought this salvation to him that he is beyond sin and out of the reach of temptation. That was my feeling the day I was baptized, and for some time after. It seemed to me that I should not be troubled by sin any more. But the truth that my flesh was still corrupt came with terrible power. When the Lord's time comes to teach his people knowledge and make them to understand doctrine, he weans them from the milk, and draws them away from the breasts, where they were having the sweet joy and comfort that belongs to the babe (Isa. xxviii. 9), and takes them into the wilderness, the wilderness of our old nature. There they learn that although this wilderness has "blossomed like the rose," and this desert has rejoiced for them, while the sunlight of God's love and joy filled their hearts, and faith and hope prevailed, yet it is a wilderness and a desert still, "where beasts of midnight howl" when the sun goeth down.

When the apostle says, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would,"—Gal. v. 17, he expresses a truth which is at the foundation of all true knowledge of

the way of salvation, and which he carefully dwells upon in various ways in all his epistles. The natural man can easily be satisfied and pleased with what he does, but not so the spiritual man. Even in his works of true obedience he sees enough of self and sin to make him low and humble before God, and to cause him the more to abhor himself. While he is thankful to the Lord for the spirit of obedience, and for the liberty to walk in obedience, yet so far as his own work is concerned he cannot see the goodness and purity of motive which he desires. Indeed, so much of the depravity of his nature appears in all he does that he is often in doubt whether it is true obedience or not. "The sins of one most righteous day would sink us in despair." "The best obedience of my hands dare not appear before thy face." So the apostle says, "Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God." And again, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not, but the evil that I would not, that I do."—Romans vii. 18, 19. The apostle is not, of course, excusing wrong doing in saying this, nor does he intimate that he is pursuing a wrong course of conduct, as not being able to do right. He does not here contradict what he says elsewhere, "I keep under my body and bring it into subjection;" and again, "Ye are witnesses, and God also, how holily and justly and unblamably we behaved ourselves among you that believe." In this and all similar declarations the apostle is giving explanation and instruction concerning the feeling of self-abhorrence and self-distrust which all of the saints have when they are spiritually minded, on account of the felt depravity of their hearts, and the consciousness of sin within them. Speaking of his own experience in this respect he tells that of all his brethren, who, when thus tried in their souls on account of their sinful flesh, cry out with him, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Then he by inspiration speaks the words which tell the only deliverance which can be had, and which does come to every one thus tried: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Then the instruction concerning this mystery is given: "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." This mind is the mind or Spirit of Christ, which Paul says we have, and without which no man can be his. (1 Cor. ii. 16; Romans viii. 9.)

In the following connection the apostle explains this more fully, saying, "If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness." This felt deadness of the body, including the natural mind and heart, to all that is spiritual and holy, is the cause of the great afflictions of the saints; of their doubts and questionings concerning their acceptance, and their deep sorrows and self-reproaches on account of sin, and because they cannot do the things that they would. But it is also the cause of the purest of joys

that can be felt in this mortal state, whenever they are made to feel that "the spirit is life because of righteousness." Then they can understand that this affliction because of "the sin that dwelleth in us," is the "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."—2 Cor. iv.

It is hard to die in this sense, to be constantly reminded by experience that no good thing dwells in our flesh, and that therefore of ourselves we can do no good thing, "cannot do things that we would;" yet this is the daily experience of the saints. The more spiritual they are the more of this dying they feel, and the more humble and abased before God, but the more also do they rejoice in spirit because the spirit is life; because Jesus is their life, and is thus pleased to manifest that life in them. Then their trust and confidence are in him, and not in themselves. The saints cannot, except when carnally minded, have gratification and comfort in any work, even a work of obedience, considered as their own work. They are not allowed to find their true comfort in a fleshly boasting; but when they are given faith to see and feel that they have been quickened by the Spirit in doing that work, that it is a work of obedience and righteousness because the Spirit was their life in doing it, then they are glad with a pure, spiritual gladness, and the flesh is out of sight. Instead of being exalted in their mind because this is a work which *they* have done, when the Lord gives them his blessed token of acceptance, and shows them that they are "greatly beloved," they will be like Daniel lying with their face in the dust, saying, "When thou spakest unto thy servant my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength."

There have been times when the words of Paul, "In me (that is, in my flesh) there dwelleth no good thing," have come to me in my extremity as though they were new, with a glad surprise that the inspired apostle had said just what I felt, and on account of which I was tempted to doubt whether I was a child of God.

"I hate vain thoughts," said David. Those thoughts which he hated were in his own mind. What a blessing that we can hate them. The two opposing principles must be in one who hates vain thoughts, the flesh from which the vain thoughts come, and the spirit by which alone we can hate them. "Am I as much to blame for my bad thoughts," asked a dear child of me the other day, "as I am for bad actions? I cannot help the evil thoughts." Such questions often arise in the minds of those who are older, and who have long been in the way. The bad thoughts we truly cannot help, but the Spirit can make us hate them, and can prevent them being acted out. The blame is the blame that fell on Adam, and on all of his posterity. In the experience of the redemption of our body we shall experience deliverance

from this "bondage of corruption," and then we shall be satisfied. When one is led by the Spirit there will be a struggle within him to silence and put away bad thoughts as well as to avoid evil actions, but enough of sinfulness will still be felt in thought and word and deed to give the most exemplary christian daily errands to the throne of grace.

There is no work that a child of God can do in the sight of men which a hypocrite cannot do as well, so far as the observer can judge. The difference between the true work and the false lies in the motive, which men cannot see. It is on this account that true christians are so constantly trying themselves, and watching their own works, and striving to know whether their motives are of the flesh or of the Spirit. They know that "whatsoever is not of faith is sin," and that no work is accepted of God except it is prompted by his own Spirit. There need be no fear of reiterating too often, or of dwelling too much upon the truth that no good thing dwells in our flesh, and that we cannot do the things that we would, for we cannot bring it oftener nor more fully before the children of God than they have it brought to them in their experience; and through the daily experience of this comes the experience of the glorious remedy, which fills the soul with true and unspeakable joy.

It is the saddest of all conditions for a child of God to become convinced that he *can* do the things that he would. So far as he feels this to be true, that far he is from Christ, and from a knowledge of his constant need of him, without whom he can do nothing that is good. It is a serious error in a teacher to teach that any one of the Lord's people *can* do the things that he would. It is also a serious error in any one to decide how often a gospel truth shall be repeated, and when a point of gospel doctrine shall no longer be preached or written about.

The child of God who knows his own inability, and who feels his entire dependence upon the dear Savior, will be enabled to walk in all the ordinances of the Lord's house blameless, and this gospel walk he will count as an inestimable blessing bestowed upon him, and will give God all the praise for the desire and ability so to walk, and for the peace and comfort that are found in that blessed way.

AUGUST 29, 1900.

THE TWO SONS

I am the more interested in the history of the younger son, because I read in it somewhat of my own history. I think I remember when I first became dissatisfied with my condition, and felt that I must improve it, though I was at that time quite young. I did not then, nor for twenty years after, understand my situation, nor my exercises, as a sinner under the law, and trying to work myself free from its condemnation. I did not understand that my works were all legal works, by which no man can be justified. But one thing I learned

again and again, and that was that my condition was not improved by any efforts I made, but rather became worse. Instead of obtaining more righteousness, and of a better quality, by my trading, I lost what I had, and became in my own sight utterly vile. I had nothing more to trade with, no legal goods left. My works were spoiled by sin, polluted, vile, and I had nothing more to offer. My hunger for righteousness was greater than ever, and there was nothing in sight to satisfy it. To me there appeared to arise all at once a mighty famine in all the land. For the first time I saw that there was no righteousness within my reach. Others appeared to have all they wanted, but I was in want, and no man gave unto me. If any was offered me it was a kind not suited to my need. When I tried to eat it I became hungrier than before.

I hired out to those who appeared rich, hoping thereby to satisfy my conscience and obtain some peace of mind with God, some feeling of righteousness, but in vain. I thought my devotion and works might help me, as those for whom I worked approved and relished them, and commended me for them; but they were husks to me, and I had to turn from it all, though my hunger consumed me. I was indeed "in a far country," "at the ends of the earth," farther off from God than any one else. All my goods, my substance, my strength, my hope, were gone, and I was left a vile, polluted sinner, "without God and without hope in the world."

But where could I go? I looked longingly toward the only righteousness I knew anything about, the righteousness of the law. Much as I had read the Scriptures which testify of Jesus, I yet knew nothing about him truly as the Savior of his people. I was totally ignorant of him as "the Way, the Truth and the Life." My former condition, which I had been so confident I could improve, now appeared good compared to my present, and I wished I could get back to it. I believed in salvation by grace, for that the Bible taught; but I thought of grace as given to show me what to do, and to enable me to do it. That one could come into God's favor without having done something to make him in some sense worthy of that favor, never had occurred to my mind. I knew I could do nothing of myself, but had till now hoped that my efforts might cause the Lord to show me what to do, and give me ability to do it. But now that hope was gone. I had been getting farther and farther away from what the law required, and now it appeared impossible that I should ever get back to where I was before. But while there is life there will be a cry in the poor, sin-sick soul. My cry was for mercy, like the publican's cry, but it was made in the legal temple, and looking toward Abraham, or the Abrahamic covenant. The eyes could not be lifted, there was not confidence enough in myself for that. Knowing no other place of righteousness, and having forfeited all rights under that covenant against which I had sinned I could only hope for some crumbs from that legal table. To be engaged about those holy things as the mean-

est servant seemed desirable now. I think, as nearly as I can interpret my own feelings on that memorable Monday morning, more than thirty-six years ago, that my face was turned as steadfastly toward that legal covenant as the face of the prodigal was toward the house of Abraham his father, from whence he had wandered away. I was wondering what the end would be, wondering if ever I would know anything, ever be anything but a vile sinner; if ever a ray of true light or a crumb of heavenly comfort would be given to me; when something wonderful took place within my mind, and I saw that the work was already done, the atonement for my sins was already made, and they were gone. That was the wonderful but trembling hope that arose within me. The words through which the revelation was made were these: "Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness." Then it appeared I was one of those for whom Jesus died, and that I was already saved. I was one of those hungry ones who are already blessed. I saw no vision, but in my soul Jesus appeared as he had never appeared before, and I was glad as I had never been glad before. I think I was received into Abraham's house, not the legal house or field from which I had gone out, but into the gospel house, into Jerusalem which is from above, to sit down among Sarah's freeborn children, where there is joy and gladness, thanksgiving and the voice of melody.

The elder son never becomes dissatisfied with his work or wages, but he is always jealous and angry when he hears music and rejoicing because a sinner has returned. The suggestion that salvation is for sinners, for those who own that they have done nothing to deserve it, excites the enmity of the legal character today the same as it did in the days of Jesus. They murmured then because he received publicans and sinners, and ate with them, and so they murmur now. It was on that account that he spake this parable, teaching thus the difference between the legal and the gospel character (Luke xv.), and showing by what experience of sin and suffering the children of the free woman are separated from the children of the bond woman, and brought by the way of "the end of the earth" to finally experience a soul-surprising welcome among the children of the heavenly Jerusalem, "which is the mother of us all." (Gal. iv. 22-29.)

JANUARY 24, 1901.

FRAGMENTS

"And if thou take forth the precious from the vile, thou shalt be as my mouth."—Jer. xv. 19.

So THE Lord said to the prophet. To take forth the precious from the vile is beyond the power of mortal man; his wisdom is not equal to that work. Only the holy Spirit of God can do that, therefore he who does so speak as to make manifest that line, invisible to human sight, between the precious and the vile, between the evil and the good, speaks not as the mouth of man's understanding, but as the mouth of God.

We know that there is a distinction between evil and good, between wicked works and righteous works, but what man has ever been able to declare always with truthful authority where that distinction is? Let a worldly man, the wisest and the best, undertake the task, and he will set forth as good, valuable, precious, that which pertains entirely to this world, philosophy, science, ambitions, and the worldly attainments which are their object, gold, precious stones, lands, power and authority over men, all of which are in God's sight fleeting vanities. Let a man possessed of worldly religion give his judgment as to what is precious and what is vile, and he will "turn things upside down," and "put darkness for light, and light for darkness." He will extol as precious that goodness and glory of man which fades and withers like the grass, and like the flower of the field, when the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it (Isa. xl. 7, 8), and that righteousness of sinful man which the Lord pronounces as filthy rags; while he will pronounce vile those soul troubles on account of sin, those humble confessions of guilt before God, and those pleadings for mercy, which are caused by the Spirit of the Lord, and which are distinguishing marks of those who are chosen and blessed of the Father.

But let a child of God try to decide where the line is that divides between the precious and the vile, and he will find perplexities and hindrances constantly in his way. When he examines his own works, the best of them, he will see so much of the evil of his nature in them that he dare not put them on that side of the line where the good and precious things are. Yet he cannot pronounce them vile altogether, for they have been approved in his conscience. He cannot say they are altogether good, nor yet can he say they are evil. He has to say, "The best obedience of my hands, dare not appear before thy face," and yet he is thankful for the spirit of obedience which he felt, and for the work of obedience in which he was given to walk.

The Spirit of the Lord can, and does, show him that line which he could not of himself see, and clear up the perplexities that he felt. "The word of the Lord is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword," and that word "pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." The soul is the natural life (the meaning of the original word is "breath," "animal life," including all the intelligence and emotions that belong to the life of man), and "the thoughts and intents of the heart" that originate in that soul are on the one side, and those thoughts and intents which result from the work of the Spirit, with the consequent actions, are on the other side. The word of God divides between them. On the one side is all that is good, and on the other side is that which is natural and evil. Every good gift, every perfect gift, every good thing, is from above, "from the Father of lights." We look in vain in any other direction for that which is good and precious. No good thing can come from man, from the soul. Every man in his best state is altogether vanity. "There is

none good but one, that is God." So said the Savior. Faith is given us as the evidence of things not seen. The things that God hath prepared for them that love him have never been seen by the eye of man, nor have they entered into the natural heart, "But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit," which searcheth all things, even the deep things of God. (1 Cor. ii. 9, 10.) Those things of Jesus are precious. Faith sees them, or by faith we see them, and receive them, and realize them as ours, and rest in them. Faith is the only power we possess that does look to the things which God has prepared for us, therefore, "Without faith it is impossible to please him." The things of faith are precious; the things wrought by Jesus, and shown unto us by the Spirit, are good and precious; the experience of sorrow on account of sin, of self-abhorrence because we are vile, of the love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost, of repentance, of a good hope through grace, all these are precious things. All opposite experiences are vile. All self-confidence, all complacent regard for our own works, considered as ours, all thoughts of our own fancied ability to please the Lord by our own works, all such feelings and thoughts are vile. The word of God, which is quick and powerful, divides between all these natural things, and those things which are the work of the Spirit in our hearts. We feel that all thanks are due to his blessed name that he does work in us at times, "that which is well pleasing in his sight," and at times, when we are led to cry mightily unto him in our trouble, that he does "make us perfect in every good work, to do his will," and that he does give us the grace and faith and power to work out that which he has so lovingly and graciously worked in us. (Heb. xiii. 21; Phil. ii. 13.)

THERE are dear brethren who have thought that when Paul said, "And we know that all things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose," he meant only "all good things." I have always thought that he meant all the things that are connected with their experience of grace, from first to last, bitter as well as sweet, evil as well as good, as we distinguish the different things in our life and exercises, calling the afflicting sense of sin, evil, and the pleasant emotions of love and hope, good. I have thought he included "the sufferings of this present time," and the vanity to which the new creature was made subject, not willingly, and "the bondage of corruption," under which we groan within ourselves, and the infirmities which cause our supplications, the intercessions of the Spirit within us, to be "with groanings which cannot be uttered," as well as the pleasant things that are given us by the way.

But let any candid man undertake to draw a line between those events, works, exercises, emotions, which he would name "good things," and those that he would call evil or wicked things. Then let him name those things which are on the dark side of the line, which are wicked, and which therefore he regards as outside of the purpose and predes-

tination of God, and those things which are on the bright side, being good things, which do work together for good to them that love God. Well, does the division answer his mind? Look over the dark list. Is there no good at all mixed up with the evil in any of those wicked works? Joseph's brethren showed some good traits. Are they and their works all put on the dark side? They were kind to their father and to Benjamin, and when Joseph spoke roughly to them they felt sorry for what they had done to their brother, who was dead, as they thought. Besides, the very things in which they meant evil against Joseph, God meant unto good. Then that wicked thing worked for good, to save much people alive. Do you know just how to divide up those things so as to place them right? All through the Old Testament we find some very evil and wrong doings, which resulted in the opening of the eyes of others to the truth, and in bringing the doer of them down into depths, where he experienced true repentance and godly sorrow. Then the wicked men who with wicked hands crucified the dear Savior, who was delivered unto them by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, did "what God's hand and counsel determined before to be done." Those who have been made alive unto God hate and abhor wickedness in themselves and others. But would we dare to undertake to put this terribly wicked deed, and that of Joseph's brethren, and that of Cyrus, "the ravenous bird from the east," with many others, on that side of the line where those things are supposed to be which God did not predestinate? But some things seem to have just a little spice of wickedness in them, which is mixed up with a good deal of kindness and generosity and self-sacrifice. We would hardly know how to take forth the good from the evil in them. Sometimes the two are so mixed up and interwoven together that we cannot tell how to divide justly; we have to leave that to the Word.

But look on the good side, have we got that all right and sure? You have placed one of my works there, for you have been very kind to me, and so all the brethren have, far more so than I deserve. But if you knew how many evil thoughts I had when I was doing that work which you have placed among the good things, you would change it, I am sure. That time I was enabled to preach so that your soul was refreshed and comforted, you did not know how much of vanity, unbelief, doubt, evil thoughts, there was in my heart. The work was good in itself, and was a work of obedience and of faith. The sermon was the truth, and I believe it was by the Spirit I was enabled to preach it. But what a tangle of briers and thorns in my own heart I had to encounter and go through while preaching that truth to which the carnal mind is enmity. But you have put these things, and the kind act I did for that poor man, and the refraining from the utterance of the anger I felt once when reviled, all on the right side, and it really makes me tremble to see them there. You cannot sift the evil out of them, but I hope the blood of Jesus, that precious blood, washed them and me clean before God. I am afraid after all that you have placed a smaller proportion of your own works on the good side, among the good things, than you have of any of your brethren.

We cannot divide between soul and Spirit, only as the Lord gives us that sharp, dividing word in our souls. We cannot take forth the precious from the vile, only as the Spirit makes us speak as God's mouth. Then we are always astonished to see so many things counted precious which we had thought were vile, and so many things which had appeared to us as pretty, and sweet, and good, now shown to be vile. When the King's "reign in righteousness" is felt in our hearts, then we no more call the vile person liberal, nor the churl bountiful, but we see things as they are in the sight of God. (Isa. xxxii. 1-7.)

One thing we know, that all good is from God. He gives us every good gift and every perfect gift, and with him is no variableness nor shadow of turning. (James i. 17.) He works the good pleasure of his goodness in us, if it is ever there. We know also that there would have been no evil or wicked thing in the world if God had purposed that there should not be. His purpose must have embraced whatever transpires. We believe, also, and know, that in the end of all things his wisdom and power will have been justified, the highest good for his people will have been accomplished, and the most exalted glory of his name attained. Does any christian doubt this?

One says, "If the advocates of the theory of unlimited predestination object to the application of their theory to all the acts and movements of beasts, birds and creeping things, as well as the acts of all men, as working together for good to them who love God, they should cease to misapply Scripture to brace up their dangerous doctrine." That doctrine which is founded on the Rock does not need bracing up. But does the brother forget the many instances recorded in the Scriptures, in which the acts and movements of beasts and birds and creeping things, as well as the acts of wicked men, were especially directed by the Lord to the fulfillment of his wise purposes? Does he forget that there is a special covenant made for his people in the gospel day "with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground?" (Hosea ii. 18.) What is there worthy of ridicule in the belief that even the mote which flies in the sunbeam, as well as the sparrow in the sky, is directed by the Lord? The frogs and insects were important in the execution of God's judgments upon Egypt. The frogs and flies and caterpillars filled the land of Egypt, but their movements were so directed and controlled that not one, not even one of the lice, could pass over the line that divided Egypt from Goshen. The Lord sent fiery serpents to punish Israel, ravens to feed Elijah, and two bears (only two) to vindicate the character of Elisha as a prophet. The lion must slay the disobedient prophet, but could not tear his body nor hurt the ass; yet he must wait quietly by until the other prophet should arrive to witness the fulfillment of God's word by him. (1 Kings xiii. 14.) Also in other cases it is recorded that lions were directed and controlled by the Lord. (1 Kings xx. 36; 2 Kings xvii. 25; Daniel vi. 20.)

It was not by chance that Herod was eaten by worms; the angel of the Lord was sent to smite him with that fearful judgment. Also the viper was directed to fasten upon Paul's arm, that the barbarians might know that he was an honest man. (Acts xxviii. 3-6.) The dove was returned by the Lord to Noah with the olive leaf, and the flight and time of every sparrow is so bounded and controlled that "one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father."—Matt. x. 29.

To me this is a most precious doctrine. It is glorious to know that in all events, and over all things, "the Lord God omnipotent doth reign." As in the case of Job, so in the case of all the Lord's people, he designs all their trials, and the cause and manner of them, and no enemy can go beyond the limits of God's purpose in his power to afflict, and all the wicked designs of men and devils shall result in the final good of the Lord's people, and in his own declarative glory. Jesus said to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." So Job recognizes only God's good hand in all the evil that came unto him through the devices of Satan, saying, "Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord, and shall we not also receive evil?" So Joseph said to his brethren, "But as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, as it is this day, to save much people alive." "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." "For of him, and through him, and to him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen."

"And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one is in bitterness for his first born."—Zech. xii. 10.

These mourners are "the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem," and these represent the Lord's people, for whose sins Jesus died. It is by the spirit of grace and of supplications, which the Lord pours upon them, that they are thus made to mourn for Jesus, who was pierced by their transgressions. It is when they feel the pain of their own sins upon their consciences that they know a measure of his pain when he bore them in his own body on the tree, and they are in bitterness for him when they feel the bitterness of their own transgressions in their souls. It is then that they can say with David, "Against thee, and thee only, have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight." Whenever one feels true sorrow before God for any sin, it is a sure evidence that this was one of those sins by which the dear Savior was pierced, and brought down into the awful depths of sorrow and death. None but those whose sins Jesus bore upon the cross will ever feel the pain of their sins upon their consciences, and the bitterness of them in their hearts. But all of them will thus "know the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings, being made comformable unto his death," when the spirit of grace and of supplications is poured upon them. Then they shall cry unto God in their trouble, and shall realize the pardoning love of Jesus. Then shall they know what it is to mourn

for him, and at the same time to feel their hearts melted before him with unspeakable thankfulness and tender love, while they feel the sweet burden of the song:

"Was it for crimes that I have done,
He groaned upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree!"

FEBRUARY 4, 1901.

THE CREATURE MADE SUBJECT TO VANITY

(Romans viii. 20.)

Who is this creature which "was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope?" It is the same creature spoken of in the preceding verse, whose "earnest expectation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God," and which in the following verse it is said "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." It belongs to the same spiritual creation referred to in verse 22, which in former dispensations groaned and travailed in pain together, and which now in the gospel day is manifest, as it ever was, by suffering, even in the apostles and early saints, who had the first fruits of the Spirit, "who groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body."

This creature is the same spoken of in 2 Cor. v. 17: "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature," and also in Eph. ii. 10: "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." This workmanship of God whereby we are created in Christ Jesus, is experienced by a man, a sinner of Adam's fallen race. Before that work of God was experienced, this man did not know himself as a sinner, and therefore did not have that kind of suffering which comes from such knowledge. In the first verse of this chapter the apostle speaks of those who are in Christ, and in the ninth verse we learn that to be in Christ, or in the Spirit, is to have the Spirit of God, or of Christ, in him. It is not until we have this experience of Christ in us that we can know that the body, which means the natural or earthy man, is dead because of sin. (Verse 10.) Let it be here noted and remembered that when the body or flesh is spoken of by the apostles in this sense, as dead because of sin, reference is not made merely to the physical body, for that cannot sin, but to the *man*, who is "of the earth earthy," the *man* who sinned and was condemned. The sin, the sinfulness, the depravity, are felt by the christian to be in his mind, in his heart, and not in the literal flesh.

The life that is now ours is the Spirit of Christ, "The Spirit is life because of righteousness." "Christ is our life," and that life is all the light we have by which to see the deadness of our body, or the living beauty and glory of Christ, and of the kingdom of God. (Verse 10.) "In him [the Word] was life, and the life was the light of men."

—John i. 4. The giving of this divine and ever holy life to the sinner is the creative work of God. It is not that the divine life or Spirit of Christ was created, nor is it that the Adamic man is new created, or made over again, but the bringing of the man forth in this new life, the causing him to be thus born of the Spirit, the manifesting of "the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh" (2 Cor. iv. 11), this is the workmanship of God; this is creating the man in Christ Jesus, and causing him to be a new creature.

This man who has been born again (from above), who has been brought forth in the life of Jesus, was first born of the flesh, brought forth in the life of Adam. In neither birth was any change of *nature* effected. In the first birth the life and nature of Adam were manifested. In the second birth the life and nature of Jesus were manifested. In being given the life of Jesus the life of the flesh was not changed *in its nature,* but remained a sinful life. Therefore David says, "My soul cleaveth to the dust;" and Job says, "My soul is weary of life;" and Paul says, "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." And throughout the Scriptures holy men have mourned on account of the felt sinfulness of their own life, and rejoiced in the evidences that the Lord was their life, and such is the experience of saints today. "Except a man hate his own life," Jesus says, "he cannot be my disciple." The two natures, the two lives, the mortal and the immortal, are both in the one person, but the spiritual or immortal is the stronger, and shall control and prevail.

The creature spoken of in the text is not the spiritual life in itself considered, nor the man who has experienced the new birth in himself considered, but it is the spirit or life of Jesus as manifest in the flesh, and it is the man considered as having this divine life, the man as being thus "in Christ." The man himself, regarded in his Adamic nature, is a sinful man, and his heart is deceitful above all things, and there is not enough goodness in his nature to cause one throb of sorrow on account of sin, or to excite the least hunger after righteousness; and the Spirit of Christ, considered separately from the flesh, can have no sorrow or pain. It was in the flesh that Christ suffered. It was for the purpose of suffering that he came in the flesh, and those who have the Spirit of Christ suffer with him. It is this suffering of the people of God with Jesus that the apostle is considering in this connection. He explains to them the cause of their suffering, and enters into the depths and heights of doctrine as he traces the exercises and describes the feelings of the little children, and thus points out and designates the humble followers of Christ.

The apostle in various places speaks of the one person in his relation both to the flesh and the Spirit. While there is an essential distinction between the flesh and the Spirit, and this distinction is maintained in all the teachings of the apostles, yet they are both in one

person, and there is an experimental sense in which they must be considered as together, though separate. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh," and will remain so until the change shall come, "and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit," and will ever remain in unyielding opposition to the flesh. But the christian is possessed of both of these opposing natures, the human and the divine, and the apostle uses the personal pronoun when speaking of both. "For *I* know that in *me* (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing." He speaks of the flesh as "*me*." "That which *I* do *I* allow not." "The good that I would I do not; but the evil that *I* would not, that *I* do." "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

Thus it is the same *I* who realizes death in Adam, or in the flesh, and who realizes life in Christ. It is the same *I* who may at one time be experimentally in Christ, and, sowing to the Spirit, reap life everlasting, and at another time may be living after the flesh and die to spiritual things; may be sowing to the flesh, and of the flesh reap corruption.

But the apostle is considering here the unchanging, unvarying inclinations of the Spirit or life of Christ which is in all his people, and the consequent suffering of the child of God because of the vileness that is thus discovered in us by the light of the Spirit. And he is intent upon declaring and showing the certainty of the glory that shall succeed that suffering in every one who has been born of the Spirit, and who is therefore a partaker of the divine nature. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us." How wonderfully connected the apostle's argument is. How one thing follows another, just in the order that keeps along with the exercises and travail of the christian. Observe how many of these verses begin with the word "for," connecting it with what was said before.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Son of God." This earnest expectation is entirely of the Spirit. It is the view of faith, looking to things not seen by mortal powers. It is the expectation of things promised in Christ, and revealed to the faith of God's people. Faith makes no guesses, but sees eternal realities. Concerning these things it is said, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." Therefore, while there is deep suffering because of the corruptions of the flesh, there is at the same time, down in the depths of the soul, a calm and confident

waiting for that which the quickened soul so earnestly desires, to see in ourselves the manifestation of that relationship as sons of God. We cannot see it in ourselves now, but we long for it, hunger for it, have been made to expect it, and quietly wait for it. We are saved by this sweet and sure hope. All this earnest expectation is in the Spirit; not in the Spirit of Christ considered in itself, but in that spirit as given unto us, and as living in our poor hearts, and as able to turn our thoughts toward heavenly things, and to set our affections on things above.

Now the apostle shows against what great and dire obstacle the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for such a wonderful and holy manifestation. That obstacle is the vanity of our fleshly nature, which he afterward calls the bondage of corruption. This is why we do not see in ourselves evidences of sonship, such as we desire. Though to our faith may come assurances at times that "we are now the sons of God," yet "it doth not yet appear what we shall be:" and we are often left to doubt that we bear such a relationship, because of the vanity of the flesh.

But now the apostle shows us that in the wisdom of God in creating his people in Christ, in giving them the life of his Son, he made them subject to the vanity of this nature. He could have caused them to be at once freed from sin and depravity, and to enter into a holy and sinless state. But it was his will that the new, divine life, the Spirit of Christ in them, should have this opposition to contend with, that this new creature should be subject to this vanity. "Every man in his best state is altogether vanity." "All the goodness and glory of man is as the flower of the field." As soon as the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it, it fades away. (Isa. xl. 7.) And because of this the workmanship of God is the more clearly manifest, and the power of the Spirit more clearly displayed, as the enduring quality and value of gold are shown more clearly when it comes in contact with fire.

For our comfort we are told of one thing that we would not have thought of without being told, and yet which we see at once to be true; "Not willingly." The Spirit of Christ is essentially and forever opposed to sin. That life of Christ which is within the poor sinner's heart is just as pure and as much opposed to vanity there as it is in himself; as the sunshine is just as pure when it falls into a polluted atmosphere as when it leaves the sun. We can at times see that there is a principle within us that is opposed to all the vanity and corruption of our natures, and which makes us long to be perfectly free from it. Thus with our minds we serve the law of God (we have the mind of Christ) while with our flesh we serve the law of sin. (Romans vii. 25.) The apostle had no reference here to evil deeds, against which he would admonish his brethren, but he referred to that corruption of the flesh to which we must always be subject, feeling it as a bondage while we remain in this mortal state.

Not willingly. This is why we suffer in the flesh. This is why we can find no permanent rest in this mortal state. This is why, when we are spiritual, we hate not only evil deeds, but the vanity of even the most exalted and the purest of earthly things. This is why our days on the earth are a shadow, and there is none abiding. This is why we hate our own lives at times, and count this world a wilderness of woe. And it is because the new creature is not willingly subject to vanity, that exhortations and admonitions have a place and power. For this creature is ever seeking the honor of God, and desiring to follow Jesus, and to show forth his praises, but ever feels the hindrances of the vanity of the flesh, and so can never do the good it would do, but is always dissatisfied with even its best works. And no matter how far one may have gone astray, it is always right to exhort, when we can do it in meekness, for though *we* cannot make the word of exhortation effectual, the Lord peradventure may give repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

Then how sweet and comforting the assurance that this subjection of God's gracious work in us to vanity is in hope. We cannot see in ourselves now what we wish to see (verses 24, 25), but we are given good ground to hope for it. For the apostle by inspiration positively asserts that we, the new creature, shall be delivered from this vanity, from this "bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God." This we are given faith to believe shall be. We long for it, and in the Spirit we expect it, and thus we have that hope which saves us from being overcome and brought down to the gates of despair by this vanity. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." No child of God can see himself as he wants to be, therefore he can never be pleased or satisfied with himself while in the flesh. He must see himself compassed with infirmities, held down by a bondage of corruption, therefore he cannot see himself as a son of God now, cannot see himself without sin, cannot see in himself, that is, in his flesh, any good thing. Therefore he is not only subject to vanity, but is subject to the temptation with which Satan tempted Jesus, "If thou be the Son of God."

But here comes into view the preciousness, and the saving power of that hope, which the Lord, who subjected the new creature to vanity, has given to light up the darkness, to cheer the heart, and to be "as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast," holding the vessel of mercy securely against all the adverse tides and terrible storms that must be met with on the ocean of time. This good hope is through grace, and does not depend for sustenance upon goodness in ourselves, or in our works, which every child of God longs for but can never see, but upon the revelation of Jesus Christ as "of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." At every new revelation of the blessed Savior to our souls, our hope seems

to be renewed and strengthened. So we continue to hope for that we see not, for goodness, sinlessness, perfection; for the manifestation of the sons of God; for deliverance from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God; for "the redemption of our body," which shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus; and for all these blessed things so surely promised and assured unto us, we patiently wait, wait in the enduring and unfailing patience of a living faith in Christ.

Not willingly. Still more and more blessedly does this wonderful expression shine out from the sacred page of inspiration, with assurance of hope, and with heavenly comfort, to the afflicted and poor people of God, who are still ever struggling on against barriers which present impossibilities to them, who are daily tried and are daily dying, and yet "who against hope believe in hope." What a comfort it is to see this "not willingly" in their own poor hearts. When they have to acknowledge that they do the things they would not, and do not do the things they would, how glad they are at times, in the midst of their infirmities and under the bondage of corruption, to remember that they *would not* do an evil thing, and that they *would do* good things.

"But if indeed I would,
Though I can nothing do,
Yet the desire is something good,
For which my praise is due.

By nature prone to ill,
Till thine appointed hour,
I was as destitute of will,
As now I am of power."

How comforting to find that the apostles are with us in this experience of infirmities which the Spirit only can help. How glad we are that Paul, as well as we, had to confess, "The things that I do I allow not." Not referring to a course of wrong conduct, but to the fact that sin is mixed with all we do, so that we cannot do the things we would, but feel "the sentence of death in ourselves," tainting all our works, only as we are given faith to do our works in Christ, to look to him for the goodness, and not to ourselves.

Not willingly. This is the holy Spirit of God from which this "not willingly" comes. There is no half way will here, no uncertainty about this will that is ever and eternally against all sin. This is the will of the Father that was done in and by the Son. There is no weakness in this will. It is not even the will of Jesus, as a suffering man, which caused him to cry, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me," but it is the will of the Father which caused and enabled him to say, "Not my will but thine be done." His own will was the will of a pure and sinless man. This will he did not come to do. This will must be crossed, denied, crucified, for it would have turned from suffering. The Father's will was done in and by him, and by that will he was crucified; by that will he gave himself to the smiters, and became obedi-

ent unto death. By that will he was raised from the dead, and by that will we are saved. That is the will concerning which that Holy Spirit teaches us to pray, "Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven." It will be done in the children of God, and through its power and exercise within them they will all eventually be brought into perfect conformity to the image of God's Son by the mighty power and working of his holy Spirit. He works in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure. In his own time, and in his own way, each of them will be made fully to know his own vanity, his own inability, "his own sore and his own plague," and will then be brought forever away from sin and weakness into the liberty of the sons of God, and will be prepared to give God all the praise of his salvation for time and for eternity.

Those who the apostle says are groaning and travailing in pain together until now, are not the natural creation, for it is not true of either man or beast. He is showing the sufferings of the Lord's people from the beginning. They were distinct from the legal worshipers, though they were among them. They all had faith in every dispensation, and by that faith they saw Christ as their Savior, and we trace them through all the Old Testament Scriptures by their groanings, complaints, self-loathings and bitter self-reproaches, as an afflicted, suffering people, whose sufferings are on account of sin in the flesh. And the apostle joins himself and all the saints under the gospel with the holy men of old, who were as much the creative workmanship of God as we, showing that although the gospel saints had received the first fruits of the Spirit, yet they groaned within themselves, looking for no comfort from the flesh, but looking for the promise of Jesus' coming, when the adoption would be fulfilled in the redemption of our body from corruption, and the inheritance into which we were adopted (using adoption as a legal figure) would be received, which is to become sons of God. This name, Son of God, Jesus received by inheritance in his resurrection. (Heb. i. 4, 5; Rom. i. 4; Acts xiii. 33.) We are heirs with him of this sonship, and when the manifestation of the sons of God shall be complete in the redemption of our body from corruption, and in the fashioning of it like unto the glorious body of Jesus, then we shall be manifest, not as adopted children, for the purpose of that legal figure is attained when we come into the inheritance, but as the real "children of God, being the children of the resurrection."—Luke xx. 36. This inheritance unto which we are begotten again by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, is not a corruptible, defiled and fading inheritance, as was the sonship we inherited from Adam, but it is incorruptible, and undefiled, and it fadeth not away, and it is reserved in heaven for all who have received the Spirit of adoption, for all who feel themselves to be poor, helpless sinners, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and who long to be like Jesus; and all the heirs of this blessed inheritance are kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter i. 3-5.)

JULY 15, 1901.

WHY?

"O Lord, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear?"—Isa. lxiii. 17.

This question does not express a bold and arrogant inquisitiveness into the secret purposes of the Lord, but is an expression rather of deep and reverent humility. The prophet is not charging God with the transgressions and hard-heartedness of Israel, nor is he finding fault with his dealings with them, though it may appear so to the natural understanding. The natural mind cannot search out the true spiritual meaning of the inspired Scriptures of truth, nor is it to the natural understanding that their rich and important mysteries are unfolded, but to the faith of the Lord's people. The things of the Spirit are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. The Spirit reveals them. They are first known in the experience of the soul, and then recognized and understood as they appear in the word of truth.

The poor soul who has been brought to see himself a sinner against a holy God, as he looks back over his sinful life, is brought down into the dust before the Lord in shame and self-loathing. He never feels like charging any part of his sins and wickedness upon any other than himself, not even upon those who may have induced him to do evil things, much less upon the Lord, but feels that all the blame belongs to himself. The language of his soul would be, "I am condemned, but thou art clear." Yet he knows that God has sovereign power over all men, and that if he has not been as outbreaking a sinner as some have, it is because the Lord has in mercy restrained him. He knows also that if the Lord had so willed he could have kept him from the evil that he has done, and that he could have brought him to see his sins and to cry for mercy long before he did. But it does not occur to the quickened soul to think that the Lord ought to have done so, nor to question his right and justice in leaving him to his own wicked ways. On the contrary, we know that it would have been just in him to have left us to act out all the evil that is in our depraved hearts, and to go down into destruction. Our wonder is that he ever made us to see and feel the sinfulness of our hearts, and to cry for mercy at all, and that he ever purposed salvation and joy and glory for such as we. And since we received this unexpected blessing of a good hope through grace, how often we have wandered in thought and word and deed from the Lord's ways. We know that at any time the Lord could have kept us from error and transgression, and could have kept our hearts soft and tender in his fear, if it had been his will. We know that, do we not? Does not any one know that? But what poor soul, when mourning over his sins, and experiencing the chastisement of the Lord for them, ever thought of chiding the Lord for them, or of finding fault with him because he did not keep us from thus acting out the evil that was in our hearts? We know that we have no right to complain for the punishment of our sins. (Lam. iii.) We feel

rather to say, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him."

But still we are sometimes in a muse, why the Lord has thus left us to err from his ways, or, using the prophet's inspired expression, "made us to err from his ways." The disposition to err was in our hearts, and it was his purpose that we should be left to manifest it. But why? we humbly and reverently inquire, Is it that we may see that his justice requires us to be cut off from before him? We cannot complain of this, if it is so. David was left to the workings of his evil heart, and did evil in the Lord's sight, and against him, that the justice of the Lord might be manifest in his condemnation as a sinner, and that the glory of grace might be clearly displayed. (Psalm li. 4; Romans iii. 4.)

Instead of chiding the Lord, and complaining because he made his people to err from his ways, and hardened their hearts from his fear, the prophet is humbly pleading with him that he will withhold the wrath which they deserve, and that he will return unto them with mercy for his servant's sake, for the honor of his name. He would acknowledge with Jeremiah that it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. (Lam. iii. 22.)

The natural man would at once question the justice of the Lord's condemnation of a man for doing what he had purposed the man should do. We can all see in our own minds the motion of an opposition to such a thing, and therefore, when left to our natural understanding, we either boldly deny that such is the case, and say that the Scriptures which declare such things do not mean what they say, or else we take the bold ground that the Lord is really the author of sin, tempting and causing a man to sin, and then condemning him for it. But the quickened soul, taught by the Spirit, is far from ascribing sin to the Lord, or saying, when he sins, "The Lord tempted me to sin," for the Lord tempts no man (James i. 13), but he takes all the blame to himself, and really feels it to be his own, and yet he knows and acknowledges God's omnipotence, and knows that nothing, not even his worst sin, could have taken place contrary to God's purpose, and he knows that every manifestation of the depravity of his heart, in a sinful word or act, but the more clearly shows that the Lord is justified in his sayings, and that he will overcome when he is judged. (Romans iii. 4.) That the Lord does purpose that certain evil and wicked things shall be done by men, acting out a portion of the wrath and wickedness of their hearts, and that they shall be punished for the evil, the Scriptures clearly show by many examples. Those who crucified Jesus did what it was the determinate counsel of God that they should do. The Lord turned the hearts of Israel's enemies to hate his people (Psalms), he brought their enemies against them in battle that he might thus punish his people, and then that he might destroy the enemies.

This is a deep and wonderful mystery, but the quickened soul feels the truth even while the carnal mind is reasoning blindly, and trying

in vain to harmonize the works and ways of God, with human reason. His judgments can never be understood by the natural mind of man, for they "are unsearchable," nor can his ways be discovered by human reason, for they "are past finding out." But the child of God, when led by the Spirit, accepts implicitly what the word of God declares, no matter how far he may be from understanding it, nor how contradictory to each other different portions of the Scripture may appear to the mind. He never ascribes sin to the Lord, for he feels that he is himself the sinner, that it is man that sins, and he feels all the blame. He knows that nothing can exist, transpire or be done that God did not purpose, for then he would not be omnipotent; and yet when the Lord says concerning the terrible wickedness of Israel in the service of Baal, "which I commanded not, neither spake it, neither came it into my mind," we understand the perfect separation of the Lord from all that is sinful. There is not, there cannot be, any sin in the Lord's purpose concerning the evil and sinful acts of men. The sin is all theirs, and always theirs. The Lord's purpose is pure and holy, and ever tends toward his own honor, holiness and glory, and the salvation of his people.

In all the transgressions of his people of old he had a wise and holy purpose. In them, and in the punishments that followed quick upon them, they were all examples for us. They "all happened unto them for ensamples," and they were written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world are come; the ends of the legal world, which are the aims or meaning and fulfillment of all the types and patterns of that legal dispensation. (1 Cor. x.)

Those who are exercised by the Spirit feel the importance of the sacred admonitions of the apostles. "Secret things belong to God." When they are revealed to us we handle them reverently. But the assurance of our souls that the Lord has settled his word forever in heaven, that all time is before him, that a thousand years are as one day with him, that he has declared the end from the beginning; all this does not hinder us from prayer and supplication, from pleading for mercy and forgiveness for our many sins; from calling upon his blessed name and entreating him to keep our feet in the right way, and to keep us from sinning against him. All this trust and confidence in the Lord, as a God of purpose and predestination, does not make us less, but rather the more, anxious to do his commands, to walk in obedience to his will, to meekly exhort our brethren unto love and good works to strive with them to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, to warn the unruly and to reprove and rebuke where it is needful to do so.

The good conscience does not excuse sin. We find no excuse for the indulgence of our selfishness and sinful lusts in the truth that our carnal natures are not changed in and by the new birth. If we have been born again, we have the life and Spirit of Christ, which shall henceforth rule us, and bring our Adamic nature into subjection.

Here constantly exists a warfare. It is a warfare, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh. The contest goes on. We cannot rest in fleshly ease. It will not satisfy us to assert that the old man is evil, and that we cannot look for any good from him. No, but we look for his evil suggestions and selfish inclinations to be denied. And where this dying of the Lord Jesus is borne about in our body we shall feel and see suffering, and shall manifest the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh, and when we speak with our brethren, or write to them, or preach to them, our communications to them will be more than a mere repeating of the words and arguments of sound doctrine. There will be felt in what we say, a savor of what we feel and suffer and enjoy from day to day. The things by which we live will be seen; the mourning sore as a dove; the chattering like a crane or a swallow; the eyes failing with looking upward; the cry of the oppressed, "O Lord, undertake for me," the sweet answer of peace from the Lord, as in the case of Hezekiah. "What shall I say? He hath both spoken unto me and himself hath done it. I shall go softly all my years in the bitterness of my soul. O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my Spirit."—Isaiah xxxviii. 9-22.

If there is not the life of an exercised soul, the struggles, pleadings, answers, in what we preach or write, it will be dry hearing or reading for the exercised people of God. In one we know personally we must see a godly life, a showing forth in the life "the praises of him who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light," or what that one says, however right in the letter, will be of no value to us. The truth of God's salvation felt in the soul, and manifested in the life, will cause the utterances of that one to have a goodly savor, and a holy power. Where there is a felt dependence upon a God of unlimited and eternal purpose and power, there will be manifested a deep and reverent humility, and a childlike confidence and trust. But a belief in a God with whom there is any degree or kind of uncertainty, any of whose favors or blessings are offered upon conditions to be performed by us, and left dependent upon our will, tends to manifest self-confidence and pride, instead of humility and godly fear, and to cause levity in speech and carelessness in act, instead of a trembling solemnity of soul, and a constant desire and prayer for the dear Savior's manifested presence and power.

October 13, 1901.

LUKE XVI. 9.

"And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations."

"*And I say unto you.*" Jesus did not speak like other men. The officers that were sent to take him said truly, "Never man spake like this man." He taught not only in a different manner from other men, but upon a different principle. The words of his that are written by

the pen of inspiration are not words by which his teaching is *to be* done, but the words which tell how his teaching has already been done. The written words tell to the enlightened understanding what the spirit and life of those words has already written in the new heart. "The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." —John vi. 63. When he said, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven," he said in words what his Spirit always says within his people. These words do not express a proposition on his part which may or may not be complied with by those to whom they are addressed, but they tell what has been, and is being wrought in them by his creative power. They express the same invincible power by which God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, as he now shines in their hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. iv. 6.) When Jesus says, "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you," he did not present a condition to those to whom he spake which they might or might not fulfill, but he declared what he speaks with living power in the hearts of those to whom he gives spiritual life, and which they can, in the Spirit, no more refuse to obey than Adam could refuse to breathe when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. This speaking of Jesus is not to the fleshly mind and heart, but to the new heart, and the flesh responds to these living words of Jesus as it is moved upon by the power of spiritual life. These spiritual powers are *always* inclined to perfect obedience, and when they are in exercise, by the grace of God, then they become effectual weapons of warfare, pulling down the strongholds of fleshly opposition, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor. ix. 4.)

"*And I say unto you.*" Not as one man says something to another which it will be profitable for him to hear and attend to, but as the Creator says to the creature in that creative work by which he is "created in Christ Jesus unto good works." When we come at the true meaning of the words of Jesus which are at the head of this article, we shall find in them not a recommendation of a course that will be for the benefit of his people to follow, but a command which has already been written in their hearts. Here is the difference between the legal character and the subject of gospel grace. Here is the difference in principle and action between the unjust steward, who is a pharisee and is covetous, and who sees in legal things only a chance for self-exaltation and emolument, and the gospel character, who has been given an honest spirit, and who sees in legal things the just requirements of a holy God, whose name must be glorified. Here is the difference between the teaching of this world's wisdom to "the children of this world," and the teaching of the wisdom which is from above to "the children of light."

The unjust steward made friends *with* his lord's goods, or riches, by requiring of his debtors less than they owed; and his lord (not our Lord) commended him, not for honesty, but for a wise forethought and care to provide for himself against the day of adversity. His wisdom was earthly, sensual, devilish, but it was wisdom in a worldly sense, and looked to his worldly advantage. It pertained only to worldly things, and was eminently selfish, and it was only commended in a worldly sense. It is only as using the wisdom that he thinks will best advance his interests that he is commended by our Savior to the attention of the children of light. They are not directed to do as he did except in one thing, and that is, to pay attention diligently to the dictates of the wisdom which belongs to them, as he diligently attended to the directions of the wisdom of this world. The Savior said, "Be wise *as* serpents, but he did not say, "Be wise *like* serpents." The children of this world are compared with the children of light to the disadvantage of the latter in one thing only, and that is, that they are wise in their generation, looking after what will be best for themselves in this world, while the children of light are not wise in their generation, when left to themselves to look after their own interests, but are constantly liable to turn aside from the path of true wisdom, and cannot therefore trust in themselves to guide themselves for one moment, but must be led constantly by the dear Savior.

That point in which they are liable to fail of true wisdom is their tendency to make use of the wisdom of this world, which constantly holds out allurements to them to follow its lead. And how often they follow the lead of that worldly wisdom, looking for the advantages it promises, until they are led by it into trouble, desolation, famine and death. The true wisdom of the child of God is *always* to distrust the dictates of earthly wisdom. Therefore from the beginning of his experience he is turned away from the ways of this world, and taught a different way, and a different wisdom. This is indicated here.

"And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends *of* the mammon of unrighteousness." To make friends *with* those riches was to use them unjustly, as the pharisees (the unjust steward) did; to make friends *of* them is to experience and acknowledge the justice of their claims against us; to honestly own our full indebtedness, and to ask no reduction, even though we have nothing to pay, but must give up our own selves to satisfy the claim. For the mammon of unrighteousness undoubtedly means the things of the law. The word mammon simply means riches, wealth personified. Unrighteousness here does not mean anything evil or wrong, but the lack of righteousness or value. There is no real value in a pattern or in a type, but only a representative of value; there are no riches in an account, but only the representation of riches. The things belonging to the legal dispensation had no real righteousness in themselves, but they were important as representing the "true riches" of the gospel dispensation. And these true "riches of righteousness" brought forth in the gospel,

which belong to the children of light, are only committed unto them after they have been found faithful in regard to the riches of unrighteousness, or the things of the law in which there is no righteousness, but only a typical representation of righteousness. One has made friends of those legal riches, the commands, ordinances, types, accounts of the legal dispensation, when he has acknowledged the justice of them. Under the law an Israelite had paid the debt when he had given up himself to be sold for it. Then the claim was settled, and in the year of jubilee he went free with no claim against him. No charge could be brought against him, for the law would stand his friend. So the law is the friend of the poor sinner who has acknowledged the justice of its claims against him. The moment he feels that he is justly sold under sin, that he is justly condemned, that moment for him the year of jubilee has come, and he is received by the very law which held such a claim against him, into the everlasting habitations of the gospel.

All of this chapter to the eighteenth verse confirms the view of the text which I have thus briefly suggested. The pharisees were covetous, so is every one who justifies himself before men. These are those who depend upon the works of the law for salvation. Though they appear to men, and to themselves, to be true servants of the law, yet in their hearts they are covetous, and do not really care for the honor of God, nor seek to magnify his law, but are seeking their own honor and riches. They are not faithful in that unrighteous mammon, or riches, which belonged to another man, and under which they were known as servants, because they had not faith. As soon as one is born of God he has faith to see the true requirements of the law. He feels that its claims against him are just. He can say, "The law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good, but I am carnal, sold under sin." Now he wants the law honored. He could not accept deliverance at the expense of the law; it would be no deliverance for him. He is faithful in these riches of the law, though there is no righteousness in them, yet they represent righteousness. There is no real value in the page of the account book which shows the great debt he owes, but it represents the true value, which he knows ought to be paid. It represents true riches. He could not dishonor those riches, that holy law, by accepting any release upon the payment of half or four score. He feels in his soul the truth which he does not yet understand, that every jot and tittle of the law must be fulfilled, that the whole debt must be paid.

That when ye fail. There is a time when every living soul must fail, and that is when he sees the amount of his indebtedness under the law of God, and the justice of it. When that is seen and acknowledged then the time of failure comes. Ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay. Then all at once the law ceases to hold us, the soul is delivered, and we are astonished and amazed to find ourselves at liberty, freed from guilt, and rejoicing in a sense of

righteousness. In his own time and way Jesus appears as having satisfied the law, and it is the riches of that legal dispensation, the accounts of that law now satisfied, which receive us into the gospel, the city of habitation. The righteousness which that law represented is now fulfilled, so that nothing can be laid to our charge, and thus the gates of the holy city are opened unto us, never to be shut any more.

November 15, 1901.

FRAGMENTS

When the sun's rays reach the earth and rest upon us, then for the first time we know that there is a sun, and know something of his character and power. It is only by himself that we can be taught of his existence and character. We can see him only by his own light. So we can know nothing of Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, except what he teaches us by revelation of himself in our experience. Till his light and truth reach us we do not know that there is such a being, however much we may have heard others speak of him. We can only know him by an experience of his presence, love and power in our souls. We can only see him in the light of his own face, as David says, "In thy light shall we see light."

When the heavens distil dew upon us at night, or manifest themselves in falling rain or snow, then we know them as we have not known them before. We learn of the clouds when their treasures of rain reach us. Then we realize vital interest in them. We cannot go up to the heavens for knowledge of them till they come down to us and furnish us a way by which to climb. When they touch us with their rain, or dew, or sunshine, or starlight, or with the vital elements of the air, then we can rise up to them.

The doctrine which drops like the rain is the only doctrine that can be of use to us, or that we can be vitally interested in. The speech that distils as the dew is that which brings true knowledge and heavenly comfort to our souls. All other doctrine and speech, however attractive to the natural mind, are too far away from the child of God to be of any real importance to him. He must have a doctrine that will touch the heart and explain the mystery of the new life within him; not a doctrine, that he can study and speculate upon, but that he can *feel*, that he has already felt. He must hear a speech that will bring refreshment to his bewildered mind and to his perplexed and wearied soul, as the dew distils from all the surrounding atmosphere and refreshes the tender herb and drooping grass.

When the Lord send messages of love and instruction to his fainting people, those messages come thus, dropping like the rain into their souls, and distilling upon them as the dew in the nighttime of sorrow; "as the small rain upon the tender herb and as showers upon the grass." The parched earth calls to the heavens, and the heavens call to the Lord, who answers with a full supply for all the needs of

his people, as he says, "I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth."—Hosea ii. 21.

I AM sure you will be careful and guarded in your manner of dealing, and try to keep your old man from interfering in the matter, and that you will remember that the Lord rules in Zion, and that appeals to him as the sovereign Judge are never made in vain. Intrigues in the church of God will never be truly successful. If a child of God engages in underhanded work to bring about a certain thing which looks desirable to him in the church, and succeeds, his success will be to him a terrible defeat. He has sown to the flesh, and will of the flesh reap corruption. It is a terrible judgment upon Ephraim when he is left to himself, to be filled with his own ways.

There cannot be too much candor, honesty and frankness among the brethren in the church of God. There should be mutual trust and confidence. We must remember that the church, according to the perfect pattern in the Scriptures, is a unit. All are one in Christ. We are members of his body. It is by his one Spirit that the whole body is animated and moved, or should be. We look for this quickening power; we are warranted in looking for it; it is according to his doctrine and promise. We trust in him rather than in the brethren and sisters as men and women.

When as a church, gathered together in one place, we are looking unto the Lord to direct us, we shall not look in vain. He will speak through the church; he will show us who is the eye, who the hand and who the feet. The right word will be spoken, and the church as a body will feel its power. If we have arranged a course in our own minds, and now try to bring it about by influencing the brethren to agree with us, we shall bring confusion. We must wait for the Lord, and wait upon him. The one Spirit which caused them on the day of Pentecost to be of one accord in one place, will direct us, as he did them, what to say and do.

"HE that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin."—1 Peter iv. 1, 2.

Not that he hath ceased to feel sin dwelling in him. (Rom. vii. 17.) Not that he can say he hath no sin. (1 John i. 8.) Not that he has ceased to be troubled by sinful thoughts and words and acts, so as to have no more need to use the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." This is not the meaning of the apostle, "For there is not a just man upon the earth that doeth good and sinneth not."—Eccl. vii. 20; and, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

The doctrine of the apostle is that he who hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased to be under the power and dominion of sin; hath ceased from it as the controlling power and principle of his life; hath ceased to be so bound and ruled by that law of sin which the flesh serves

that he should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, and not to the will of God. Since the same man who with his mind serves the law of God, with his flesh serves the law of sin (Rom. vii. 25), it is a wonder how it has been so brought about by the work of Jesus that he hath ceased from sin, so that he is not a debtor to the flesh to live after the flesh (Rom. viii. 12), but is constrained by the love of Christ to live not unto himself, but unto him who died for him and rose again. (2 Cor. v. 14, 15.)

"Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind: for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin." When the Savior suffered in the flesh for us he satisfied that law without which sin is dead. (Rom. vii. 8.) He did not remove sin from our flesh, but he took away its power. He died unto sin once, and by that suffering and death in the flesh he destroyed the power and dominion of sin over his people, taking them from under the law, and bringing them under grace. (Rom. vi. 14.)

When we suffer in the flesh on account of sin, we are experiencing the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings, by which he condemned sin in the flesh; and faith shows us that thus our everlasting deliverance from sin and death is assured. Through this suffering in the flesh it is made known to us that "we are dead with Christ, and if we be dead with him, we believe that we shall also live with him." "He that is dead is freed from sin." This experience of suffering in the flesh on account of sin, which causes a constant striving in the soul against it, may be, and is, I think, what the apostle speaks of as "resisting unto blood, striving against sin," which he says some had not yet done. (Heb. xii. 4.) They were still looking somewhat to the works of the law as partly the ground of hope, and as necessary in their conflict with sin, striving to overcome sin by something they could do. But when any one comes to the end of sin experimentally, he finds death, for that is the wages of sin. Those who fully resist die. All true resisting ends in death. It is with some a daily experience, "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." Thus through great tribulation there is a daily entrance experimentally into the kingdom. How little one who is thus deeply exercised really cares for the sinful things of the world, though he may try to care for and enjoy them as before. He hath ceased from sin as a condemning and controlling power, so that it cannot turn him away from the precious hope of righteousness by faith, which the saints wait for. (Gal. v. 5.) While he has to confess that he is still a poor sinner, he can say by faith, "I am dead, and my life is hid with Christ in God;" "Not in my own worthless name, but in the name of Jesus, will I set up my banner." "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

We are to remember that the apostle does not speak of the flesh as suffering, but the saint as suffering *in* the flesh. Also, I do not

understand Paul, in Heb. xii. 4, to allude to literal blood, as that shed by martyrs, but as that experimental death which they should all fully realize, though they had not yet gone that far. Blood flowing from a wounded body represents death.

JANUARY 7, 1902.

SORROW UNTO DEATH

The loneliest thing that can be imagined in all the world was the ark as it went upon the face of the waters. Not another object to be seen on all that wide and dismal waste of water that covered the earth, not even a mountain top. "The waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered." Alone upon that dark and dreary expanse, tossed upon that heaving, shoreless flood, with the terrible rain still falling from the black and angry heavens, what scene of greater and more awful desolation can be pictured to the mind; what lonelier object can be imagined?

But there is a scene of greater desolation, of more utter and hopeless loneliness in sorrow and suffering, as the reality is greater than the type. It is Jesus in the wilderness, in the garden, on the cross. When the great deep of God's judgments was broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened to pour out the just wrath of God against sin, only One felt the full power of that terrible flood. It fell upon Jesus the Son of God, and he was alone in bearing it. He was appointed unto this suffering and prepared for it. The infinite wisdom and power of God in this mystery are "unsearchable and past finding out."

All flesh upon the earth died while the rain was falling, but the ark was prepared to feel the full force and terror of the storm to the end. In that was the salvation of those within the ark. So while death has passed upon all men because of sin, Jesus was prepared to feel all the terrors and pains of that death, and to bear all the curse of that law which condemns all flesh to death, until every jot and tittle of it should be fulfilled, until the last drop of the rain of God's wrath had fallen. It must all fall upon him while in our flesh. His sorrow was unto death while he was yet in this mortal life. He must taste all the bitterness of death before he died. Unconsciousness could not come to relieve him of one pang.

And he was as absolutely alone in that suffering as the ark was alone in the flood. In a wonderful and mysterious sense the life of all his people was in him, and they were "preserved in" him, as all those who were to people the earth after the flood were preserved in the ark. But in his suffering and sorrow while under the curse of the law, he was alone. His disciples could go with him to the garden, but not to the place where extremity of sorrow brought him down to the

ground. Three of them, who seemed more closely his companions on special occasions than the rest, could be with him a little farther, but could not yet follow him in his great sorrow. "Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with me." But they could not watch at that time. They slept for sorrow. The sorrow that prevents sleep was not yet upon them. That sorrow was his. He had looked forward to this hour, for he had come into the world for the suffering of this hour; yet now that it had come, "he began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy." No matter how certain our expectation of any affliction may be, yet we cannot feel it before the time, and then it will appear almost as thought we had not foreseen it. This sorrow of Jesus was the greatest and most bitter sorrow and grief that ever was felt by man. It was by his Spirit, and concerning his suffering, that Jeremiah said, "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." And again, "I am the man that hath seen affliction by the rod of his wrath." (Lam. i. 12; iii. 1.) Now that the hour has come, his own will as a man, weak before the law because of others' sins, full of terror of soul on account of death under the curse of the law, caused him to cry unto his Father to save him from that hour, and to cause the cup to pass from him if it were possible. So great was his suffering that "an angel appeared unto him from heaven, strengthening him." And even then, "being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." But the strength that the angel brought prevailed. He came down from heaven to do his Father's will, not his own, and his prayer was, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." He must bear the suffering alone. His people cannot share the burden of sorrow, pain and death, with him. It is their salvation that he, the pure and holy Son of God, a spotless sacrifice, bears the awful suffering alone. If that death that fell on him had touched one of them, that one must have suffered an everlasting death. If any of the water of the flood could have broken through the ark to touch one of those within, then the ark, with all it held, must have sunk forever. But it "was pitched within and without," so that it alone should bear the beating of the storm from which the eight souls within are securely shielded.

So Jesus was prepared to suffer to the full alone, and to die alone, in this sense, as a sacrifice. The part his people have in that suffering and death is not *with* him, but *in* him.

In the ark the eight souls were saved by water. (1 Peter iii. 20.) The water that drowned all flesh upon the earth lifted the ark and those within it above its own destroying power. So the death that Jesus died raised him and all who were in him above the power of death forever. Death was all that was due for their sin. When he died the wages were fully paid, and when he arose by the power of

God the dominion of death is at an end. Death is abolished, and life and immortality brought to light.

Those who saw the rainbow on Mount Ararat had all been in the ark, and had felt the terror and buffetings of the storm which fell upon the ark, though they had not at the time known what it all was. So those who are able to see the everlasting covenant of grace are manifest as having been saved in Christ.

This wonderful story of the sufferings of the Savior can never be told to the understanding of any one who had not been already made to feel it in his own experience. It is not by the application of our mental powers that we come to know what Jesus suffered, but by experience. It is a revelation. The disciples, who loved him, and were near him in the garden, could not then know what he was suffering. How much less is our ability to enter into that awful and solemn mystery by our own efforts. It is one thing to have our natural sympathies stirred by reading the inspired recital of his pains and sorrows, and meditating upon them, and quite another thing to feel a measure of those same pains and sorrows within our own souls. In the latter case the poor soul that is experiencing the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings never knows at the time that it is the fellowship of his sufferings that is felt. Those who were in the ark must have been in great terror and perplexity much of the time while they felt the tossing and shaking of the ark, not knowing what was going to become of them. They could not look out around them, for there was only one window, and that was above. But after the covering was removed from the ark, and they came out on the new earth, then they understood what had been done, and knew the meaning of their strange experiences.

In coming into the knowledge of Jesus' sufferings each one is alone. It is so in the beginning of this necessary knowledge, and at every farther advance into this awful mystery the learner is alone. They are led by a solitary way. "They shall mourn apart; every family apart, and their wives apart." Each one says to himself, "No one can be as vile in heart as I." Each one feels his own to be an especial case of depravity. If he has been kept from outbreaking sins, and has not forfeited the respect of men, yet he sees that evil in his heart and in his thoughts which appears to him to set him apart as especially vile. He has to say with Job, "Behold, I am vile. I abhor myself." Yet he cannot feel that he stands where Job was when he said those words.

It is wonderful how this sense of being alone in all our troubles on account of our special sinfulness attends all of the Lord's people, and follows them in a measure all the way through. And yet how seldom it is that during the time of the especial tribulation they ever think that in this they are following the dear Savior. Just what his sufferings were they must know, though only in measure, for it was for them he suffered, and they suffer in him. As soon as the thought

comes to them that the great tribulation on account of sin that is pressing them down into the depths is because Jesus suffered for that very sin, and that they are mourning "for him whom they have pierced," then the trouble is lifted and they rejoice, though still mourning on account of sin, and being in bitterness because their sins caused him such awful sorrow and anguish.

What cries for mercy go up from the poor soul while being tossed as it were on the waves of that desolate, shoreless sea. The cries may be unspoken, silent to the ear of any but the Lord, but O, how bitter, how full of anguish they are. Truly they are "groanings that cannot be uttered." What a tender, quieted feeling takes possession of our souls when we first feel a hope that peradventure the Lord hears us. And who can tell the deep joy when we first get a glimpse of the beautiful bow of promise in the cloud, the everlasting covenant of grace, and feel in our souls the blessed promise of the Lord that "the waters shall no more go over the earth," and "that the Lord will no more be wroth with us nor rebuke us." How many a time since that blessed experience we have feared his wrath and felt the rebukes of the gospel; yet that promise has held good, and will be good unto the end, for it is "Yea and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God by us."

"As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 Cor. i. 5. So we learn that suffering is the experience of the Lord's people all through their pilgrimage. They have consolation, but it is only according to the suffering of Christ in them, and as the result of those sufferings. When they stand before the throne, beholding the power of God with praise, it is as having come out of great tribulation. When the life of Jesus is made manifest in their mortal flesh, it is because they bear about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus. (2 Cor. iv. 10.) When they are favored to lean upon their Beloved, it is as they are "coming up out of the wilderness."

Now this suffering is not some exalted, holy feeling, such as you, my brother or sister, have imagined belongs only to those who are far above you in purity and goodness; but it is just what you feel of sorrow, shame and self-loathing while you see the evils of your corrupt nature, and the sins and sinfulness of your heart and life. This is sometimes proved to you while in humble contrition and self-abasement before God you are enabled humbly to confess them, and are given the soul-surprising assurance that these very evils and transgressions in thought and word and deed that have made you hate yourself, are the ones that were laid upon the dear Son of God, the very sins for which he died. While in the darkness, with only your sinful flesh in sight, how very much alone you felt, and how your soul was tossed about, and buffeted, and almost overwhelmed, like a ship on the stormy sea; but now as your soul gets a sweet view of Jesus, and rises to a blessed

hope that you are feeling the fellowship of his sufferings, you feel like singing praises to his name, and telling to all that fear God what he has done for your soul.

At such times his service is very sweet and comforting. We count it a blessing to feel the Spirit of obedience, and to be enabled to act out that obedience. But how often we are tempted to doubt our motives in our religious works, and fear that we are prompted by the vanity of the flesh. From first to last the experience of the exercised soul leads him to doubt the movements of the flesh, and to earnestly seek unto the Lord to be led by his holy Spirit.

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." When the Spirit of the Lord is searching and probing our hearts, what anxiety, what jealousy we feel lest it be the flesh instead of the Spirit which is leading us, even when we are doing what we know it is the privilege of the Lord's people to do. We question sharply our motives, fearing they are selfish, and that we are not doing all to the glory of God." We are sometimes told that we ought to obey in order that we may feel better, but the word of God and his Spirit do not teach us that, but that "whatsoever we do we should do all to the glory of God." The Spirit alone can lead us in that holy way. Every fleshly motive is selfish, and hence our fear and anxiety.

It does not help and encourage a poor soul who is tried in this way to say to him, "You ought to obey in order that you may feel better." The Savior's obedience did not make him feel better, but brought him into darkness and into the depths, and filled his soul with bitterness. But what he did was for the glory of God. We may say to one in whom we have seen an experience of grace, "You ought to be baptized; it is your duty. If you obey you will feel better." But his reply may be, "I fear that such a holy privilege is not for such as I. I fear it would not be obedience, but presumption in me to receive that ordinance which belongs to the Lord's people." Now it is for us not to urge such an one forward while his conscience, which is very tender in the fear of the Lord, is filled with such solemn questionings. We can show to him, as we may be enabled, the scriptural marks of those to whom that ordinance belongs, but we must all remember that the assurance in his soul that the sweet command rests upon him must come from the Lord.

Brethren in the ministry, if your obedience to the call which vou have felt in your souls to preach the gospel was in order that you might feel better, how many of you would or could go on in that solemn work? Think over your experience in that business which you did not seek, but into which you were thrust. What shrinkings and sinkings of soul you have felt as you have approached the time when you must stand before the people of God, and have tried to begin to try to preach in the name of Jesus, the gospel of his grace. Sometimes your trembling sense of unworthiness, inability and unfitness

for that great work have continued through the sermon, and sometimes you have been lifted above yourself, and have been filled with the sweetest, holiest joy a poor mortal can feel as you declared, in the power of the Spirit, the glad tidings of salvation. Sometimes it has been quiet work, and you have felt thankful that you were in any degree enabled to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

But O, the trials, the misgivings, the wretched, wearying doubts after your work for the time is done, and you are alone again. What heart-searchings, what questionings whether you have not been preaching yourself more than Christ, whether your glorying was not more in yourself than in the Lord. How many a time you have said to yourself, "Surely, I must never undertake to preach again." Well, the Lord knows how to deal with his servants. You have not quit the work yet, nor will you until you have fulfilled the work unto which he has called you. You are not preaching in order that you may feel better, but for the glory of God. You cannot stop, though you feel as though you could not go on. There is a blessedness in the work, even in the sufferings and sinkings down, for in it all Christ is exalted.

And you, poor soul, who look with love and longing upon the ordinances and privileges of the church, and wish that they might be yours, in the Lord's own time the sweet persuasion will be yours that they belong to all who want them. In the Lord's good time the power of his word of sweet command as written in the Scriptures will be felt in your heart: "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her." —Isa. lxvi. 10. We must all wait for the Lord, and, blessed be his name, he always comes "right early." All our times are in his hand, and they can neither be hastened nor delayed.

We all see in ourselves enough of disobedience, and enough of sin in the best obedience of our hands, to give us daily errands at the throne of grace, and to bring out of our souls the publican's cry for mercy.

How many of the Lord's dear people go far in disobedience, living after the flesh until they die away from spiritual things. How often we feel that in faithfulness we ought to exhort, reprove or rebuke them, but are held back for fear we are not spiritual, and therefore are not qualified to restore such ones, or thinking that we ourselves need the reproof as much as they, if not more. But we must try to do our duty; yet if it is only as a duty we do anything it is of but little account before God; and if it is only to relieve ourselves of responsibility, and "to feel better," that we do anything, the motive is only a fleshly one.

When the love of Christ constrains us, then love to the erring or needy one will prompt what we do or say, and while we do our work faithfully, and in the fear of the Lord, we shall remember that the Lord only can give repentance. Scolding never restored a wanderer, nor ever honored the Lord. The fire which the Lord kindles on the

altar of the heart will never quite go out. The Lord will brighten it in his own time. He, and not man, gives the stripes which bring back the children who forsake his law. However far they wander, he knows where they are, and is visiting their transgressions with the rod, as he said he would, and they are often feeling that rod most when to us they appear most defiant and stubborn.

The salvation of God which grace brought to us in our first experience of a hope, is the same salvation which that grace bringeth through all our earthly pilgrimage in every time of need. That grace which bringeth this salvation teaches all the various subjects of it all things in their walk and life which become sound doctrine, and in which that salvation is manifested unto them from day to day, in all the various circumstances of their life, and that grace will keep them through faith unto the full and glorious revelation of that salvation in the last time. (1 Peter i. 5.) It is that salvation which the psalmist prays may set him up on high. It is that salvation that appears in all the beautiful order of the church, and which the saints minister to each other while walking in the commands of Jesus. It is the salvation of God of which the apostle speaks when he says to Timothy, "In so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee," and which appears in the faithful ministration of him who converteth a sinning brother from the error of his ways, when he thus "saves a soul from death and hides a multitude of sins." The saints have no salvation of their own to handle, and deal in, and minister, separate from the salvation of God. Jesus is our salvation, and to him the poor soul cries in times of darkness and distress, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." Without Jesus, our salvation, we can do nothing. He is our Sun, and his salvation, like the sunlight, reaches "to the ends of the heaven, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." That salvation will not fail any of the saints. Who speaks of another salvation which is not of grace, but of works? That salvation, and the grace that brings it, are sufficient for us in all our times of need. They appear in the obedient walk of the faithful people of God, who walking in his fear and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost are edified and multiplied (Acts ix. 3), and also in the rod and the stripes with which our faithful and loving Savior visits his erring children, and restores them to the joy of his salvation. All our times are in his hand, and provisions of grace and salvation are made for each of them. The child of God who has gone farthest in rebellion and sin, when, restored to his right mind, feeble and sore broken, humble and contrite, crying bitterly, he feels the sweet and compassionate and loving beams of salvation falling softly into his sorrowing soul, has to say, "Behold, what wondrous grace and mercy that could save such a sinner as I." And the most obedient child of God, as he looks over his life and contemplates his labors in the Lord, and the love and fellowship which the brethren have manifested to him, and then sees in his own heart and life such evidences of a depraved

nature as sink him into the dust, wonders at the mercy which, like Paul, he has obtained of the Lord to be faithful, is astonished that he has been kept in the comfort of obedience while others have been suffered to wander far away, and suffer much for disobedience, and instead of feeling that any praise or reward is due to him, he says, "What have I that I did not receive? If God had dealt with me according to my deserts, I should not have stood. To him be all the praise. It was not I that did these works of obedience, 'but the grace of God which was with me.'" So the most faithful saint on earth, joins with the worst backslider when restored to the manifest favor of God, and says, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and there is no one left out of that heavenly choir when they sing in perfect accord, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake."

FEBRUARY 2, 1902.

UNTO JOHN'S BAPTISM

I wish to present more fully than heretofore my reasons for believing that the twelve disciples whom Paul found on his second visit to Ephesus had not been baptized in gospel order, and that when the apostle explained the matter to them they were, by his direction, baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. (Acts xix. 1-7.)

1. My first reason is the plain and only reading of the text. There must be a radical change in the construction of two sentences, verses five and six, in order to make them express any other meaning than that when these disciples heard what Paul told them about John's teaching those whom he baptized the necessity of a belief on the Lord Jesus, then they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

2. Paul did not ask the men who baptized them, but unto what they were baptized; that is, what pattern or authority they had in view in receiving that ordinance. If John personally had baptized them it could not be said that they were baptized unto his baptism.

3. About twenty-five years had passed away since the death of John. If it were at all likely that these men had been baptized by him, how could they have failed to hear of the baptism of Jesus and of the Holy Ghost during all those years? John's baptism was his own personal work. No one ever had the right to baptize in his name, or unto his baptism. Of the one hundred and twenty who were together after the ascension of Jesus, some may have been baptized by John. On the day of Pentecost, and from that day I do not see anything to warrant the thought that any were added to the church without being baptized. We do not read of any coming and being received in any church upon any former baptism. How strange it would seem to find, twenty-three years after the notable day of Pentecost, twelve men who had been baptized two or three years before that day, and yet in all that time had not even heard that there was any Holy Ghost, nor known the baptism of Jesus.

4. Paul had been at Ephesus some time before, bringing Aquila and Priscilla from Antioch, and leaving them there. At that probably his first visit to Ephesus, he did some preaching and reasoning in the synagogue, and soon left them. Some time after (Acts xviii. 24), Apollos came there. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, but not perfectly, knowing only the baptism of John. He spoke for some time eloquently and diligently, teaching the things of the Lord so far as he knew them. Whether he or his imperfect instructors baptized these twelve men we cannot tell. He had not been teaching long before he was heard by those who were fully instructed in the gospel, and they faithfully expounded to him the way of God more perfectly.

These twelve disciples were found at Ephesus on Paul's second visit. They seem to have been recently baptized, and likely they had not heard Apollos after he had been more perfectly instructed and had begun to preach the gospel of Jesus clearly.

5. The apprehension that the validity of John's baptism is involved in this question, has undoubtedly led some to try to re-arrange the sentence so as to make it express the idea that these men had been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, but had never known it till Paul told them. Our object and effort should be to find out what the inspired Scriptures do really say, without reference to what we might think they ought to say. The validity of John's baptism, as his personal act, is not at all involved in this subject, but only his baptism as the example and authority to be had in view in administering the ordinance under the gospel. John's baptism ceased when he ceased to administer it personally.

However satisfied one may have felt when receiving baptism, if it was not administered in gospel order then it is not gospel baptism. The ordinance must be in the name of Jesus, and the faith of him who is baptized must be in that name. It must be in the fellowship of the gospel church, in accordance with the command given by Jesus to his apostles, and set in order by them in their acts and teaching.

How carefully and jealously should the order of the gospel church be observed and guarded. To the eye of faith that church is "the perfection of beauty," out of which "God hath shined." It is the order as established by the Lord, not the numbers, by which any organization is known as the church of God.

Many are around almost any gospel church who have not been baptized, yet who are loved and held in esteem by the brethren as dear children of grace. They love the church, and attend with deep interest upon the preaching of the word, and yet they do not come in. We often try to show them that it is their privilege and duty to be baptized, but without avail. We often feel that we ought to be able to say the loving and powerful word that shall remove the hindrances from their minds, but it is not given us to say it. We have to learn that it is in the day of God's power, not in the day of our power, that

his people shall be willing. When any do come, and O, how easily and sweetly they come when the Lord opens the way, both they and we know that it was God's power, not ours, that brought them. If they never come, as is the case with so many dear believers in the Lord, we know that it was not God's purpose that they should be thus united with the visible church of God, as his witnesses here in the world. We still are bound up with them in the bundle of life, holding them in christian love and fellowship, though not being able to extend to them the hand of church fellowship. When they leave this world we believe they have gone to dwell with their Savior in glory.

Baptism is an ordinance of our dear Savior for this time state, but has nothing to do with the preparation of his people for heaven and its eternal glory. To that eternal glory and blessedness "many are called," even a great company that no man can number, "but few are chosen" to be of "the little flock," to whom the kingdom is given here in time, who shall stand as witnesses of Jesus in the world, as the church of God," the pillar and ground of the truth." For this church, and those individually who are members of it, there are appointed reproaches, and burdens, and afflictions, and a yoke, and labors, and crosses, and daily dyings, and honors unseen by the world, and joys unknown to men, and conflicts; all of which are in some measure seen by the dear children of God without, but not shared in by them except in small measure.

But these things end with time. Our eternal state is not affected by them, nor is there any difference there between those who were in the visible church here, and those of God's dear people who were not. We cannot say to one, "If you will join the church here you will be the happier hereafter." The Lord gives his servants here a higher, holier motive to labor in his service than that, even his own glory. Love is in the heart of every redeemed soul when called by grace here below, the love of God, whether in the church or out, and that love remains when we go from earth to glory. In that blessed world of light all the redeemed shall join in the endless song of praise unto God and the Lamb.

February 4, 1902.

FRAGMENTS

If one who is a subject of grace does not clearly comprehend and fully accept some particular point of doctrine, as the predestination of all things, or that the old carnal nature is not changed and made spiritual in the new birth, shall the preacher insist upon setting that particular point of truth before that one every time he preaches, to the exclusion of other parts of the great variety of spiritual truth? Some continually dwell upon the same subject, especially when they suspect some to be present who dispute that point, or are not fully in accord with it. At such times such preachers seem to feel it their duty to repeat and repeat their arguments in defense of that

doctrine; and not only that, but they are inclined to reprove one who does not on every such occasion reassert his belief in the disputed point of truth, and repeat his reasons for his belief. One who may disregard the opposition to that point sufficiently to go on to other important and blessed portions of truth, is sometimes thought to be lacking in boldness and faithfulness as a gospel preacher, and as a watchman upon the walls of Zion.

Suppose one member of our household does not like beef. He sees that it is good food for others of the family, for they relish it, and thrive upon it, but he does not seem able to digest and assimilate it well. He prefers lamb and wheat and herbs. Shall I persist in placing a generous piece of beef upon his plate every time I wait upon the table, and insist that he shall eat it? He says, "I am willing you shall have your strong meat. It seems to do you good, and I am glad to see you enjoy it; but as I am weak, let me have my herbs, with a little lamb or a young pigeon." Shall I still insist that in his case beef is a necessity? That unless he shall eat of it freely his right to sit at the table is questionable? Shall I not rather cheerfully and lovingly accord to him his privilege of choice of all the good things of the gospel which are spread before us, and his right to eat what suits his present appetite, though it be only herbs? If I am spiritual I will not despise him because he eateth only herbs, nor he, if spiritual, judge me because I eat meat. (Rom. xiv.)

How often we are surprised to see that one whose food we were so anxious about, seeking of his own accord for that very piece of strong doctrine which we had tried so often in vain to force him to eat. He has been brought into that condition by the Spirit of the Lord, which makes him now need that particular kind of food. Herbs do not satisfy his need now, nor even lamb. He must have the beef, and a large piece of it, too. We could not make him hungry for it by all our zealous urging, but the Lord could do it easily in his appointed time. Instead of turning away from that doctrine, now he sees it as a green pasture into which the great Shepherd makes him feed and lie down in sweet gospel rest.

I would not have any minister of the gospel avoid any scriptural truth which may be upon his mind because of the presence of any opposer. I am not conscious of ever having done so. If I have, I have done wrong. But I cannot say that I have not dwelt upon some disputed point because of the presence of some one whom I regarded as an opposer. At such times I have often feared that I was actuated by the contentious spirit of the carnal mind. It is my desire to preach the truth in love, trusting to the power of the Spirit to make a way for it, and give it force, rather than to any power in myself.

The Lord's ministers are not sent to debate, but to deliver the solemn messages of the gospel. The excellency of the power is of God, and not of man, and that is the reason we have this treasure in earthen vessels. The gospel is high above all worldly subjects. It is solemn,

and clear, and firm, and well defined, and stands in clear and sharp contrast with, and contrary to all the principles of natural religion, as the light of the sun is in contrast with darkness. The preacher of the gospel, who is an earthen vessel, has no power to cause any one to see or believe the truth. But when the Spirit enables him to preach, those who have been prepared by the Lord will see that truth and gather to it, as those whose eyes have been opened will see and rejoice in the light.

All of the Lord's people are not prepared to see with equal clearness all points of divine truth at all times, and instead of dwelling always upon that which is not clear to some one or more of the dear children of God, as though it were left to us to give them power to see all things clearly, we should go on handing out of the rich variety of blessed good things spread upon the table of the Lord, remembering that it is the Lord who alone can give the second touch upon the eyes, enabling each poor soul to look up and "see all things clearly." While we are presenting some other of the precious things of the gospel, it is often the case that the particular truth which some of the children had not clearly seen, is made clear to them. Then we know it is the Lord who has done it, and not we. Then can each one say, "The Lord is my Shepherd."

March 15, 1902.

THE RESURRECTION

"But God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body."—1 Cor. xv. 38.

This is a great mystery, and I hesitate to write concerning it, and yet I am drawn in my mind to do so.

On the subject of the resurrection of the body, it seems at first thought as though I could be contented to simply say, I take just what the Bible says on the subject, and believe that; but I do not understand it. In considering this subject I am apt to think more of what is not true concerning it than of what is, for the natural mind is constantly trying to enter into this mystery, as also into all the other mysteries of the gospel, and to understand and explain all the details of them. But this cannot be. The natural man cannot understand these things. The ways and judgments of God are unsearchable and past finding out. (Rom. xi. 33.)

What I do believe, and sometimes rejoice in, is that "There is a resurrection of the dead." "The dead are raised up." The Lord Jesus Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."—Phil. iii. 21. How this work shall be done I do not know, nor does any mortal, any more than any one knows how the world was made out of nothing. How the raised body will appear I do not know, nor does anybody else. It is by faith alone that we know that there is a celestial body. "We know not

what we shall be," said the apostle John, but we know that we shall be like Jesus, and we know that we shall be satisfied with his likeness (1 John iii. 2; Psalm xvii. 15), and we know that when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall also appear with him in glory. (Col. iii. 4.)

The poor, tried soul is very apt to disclaim such wonderful knowledge, and to say that he does not know these wonderful things for himself, though he knows they are true of all the people of God. It is seldom that one can realize in himself "the full assurance of faith" to say, "I know that I am a child of God," and that "I shall behold his face in righteousness." This knowledge is an experience; it is an experience of the power of divine life; it is a belief which rests not upon the evidence of things which we can see and understand, but upon faith, which "is the evidence of things not seen." Sometimes the truth of our experience of this knowledge of faith is brought forth to our view under the ministration of the word, and by the teaching of the Spirit, so that we can say with holy assurance and with tremulous joy, "We know that we have passed from death unto life."

Again and again we are halted in our efforts to search deeper into the mystery of the resurrection, and attain unto a more perfect knowledge of it. It is not to be known in any degree by searching; it evades the scrutiny of the keenest intellectual powers. It is understood as fully by a child as by the most learned man. It is known only by revelation. It is believed only upon the evidence of a God-given faith. It can never be understood except in the experience of it. We are to "hold fast the form of sound words," concerning this, as well as all other spiritual subjects, "in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." All that is written of it in the Bible is true, but is not for the comprehension of the natural mind, but for the comfort and instruction of the Lord's people.

We can say certain things both negatively and affirmatively concerning this deep but lovely mystery, which will never be understood in time, and so by the teaching of the word we may be kept from erroneous ideas on the subject, awaiting the times when the Lord may be graciously pleased to open "the form of sound words" more fully to the understanding of our faith.

1. The raising of the body of Jesus from the grave is not mentioned in the Scriptures as an *example*, showing how the bodies of his people are raised up. The bodies of the saints are not to be raised up as his body was raised up, for his body saw no corruption, while theirs shall all see corruption. His body came out of the grave just as it was put into the grave, no change having yet come upon it, in order that witnesses, chosen before, might see that it was still unchanged. They saw the print of the nails and the place of the spear, and saw him eat and drink. Thus he was manifest as "the Resurrection and the Life." Afterward he was glorified.

2. From that day that he ascended out of the sight of his disciples he is never to be known any more after the flesh. Therefore there appears to be a direct contradiction in the Scriptures to the theory that Jesus now exists in a body of flesh and bones in heaven, and that his people after the resurrection shall so exist in a body like the one we have in this mortal state. The apostle says, "Wherefore, henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more."—2 Cor. v. 16. Also, we read that "It doth not yet appear what we shall be."—1 John iii. 2. Also we are told that the body "is raised a spiritual body." Jesus' body could be seen after he came out of Joseph's new tomb. That was the evidence that he had abolished death, and had become the destruction of the grave, and had brought life and immortality to light. From the time he ascended up on high and was glorified he has not been seen by the mortal eyes of his disciples. He is not seen in any way by anybody but his disciples.

Now we are to remember that it is the same body which is sown in corruption that is raised in incorruption. It is the same body which was sown a natural body that is raised a spiritual body. The sowing is undoubtedly the instant of death. We are to notice that the resurrection is not a preliminary act to the change. We do not read that it is raised and then changed to a spiritual body, but it is raised a spiritual body. At its last appearance to the mortal sight of the saints on earth it is a corrupt, natural body. At its next appearance to the faith of God's people here, and to their spiritual sight in glory, it is a spiritual body that shall never know corruption. It is the same body which was a vile body here on earth that has been changed that it may be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus.

3. This is all I can say. How this work is done I do not have the faintest knowledge; I only know that it is according to the working of Jesus, "whereby he is able to subdue even all things unto himself." How we shall appear in that glorious body I do not know; I only know, and rejoice to know, that we shall be like Jesus, and that we shall appear with him in glory.

In replying to the question of the one whom he addresses as a fool, as to how the dead are raised up, and with what body they come, the apostle illustrates the subject by the dying and quickening of grain after it has been sown in the earth. It must die in order that it shall be quickened. The body given the grain in its resurrection is its own body. The apostle does not mean by this that the grain which fell in the earth is lifted out again. It is not in this sense that the seed is given its own body, but that to the seed of wheat is not given a body of rye or of some other grain, but of wheat, the same as the seed which was sown. Why does the apostle bring this peculiar figure for our contemplation just here? Because the one he calls a fool evidently regards the resurrection as the lifting of a body out of the grave, and wants to know how it is done. He evidently is combatting and hushing

the thought of the natural mind that in the resurrection the body will be raised in the sight of men, and the desire to know beforehand how that body will appear.

But the apostle has been presenting Christ as the fullness of the resurrection. The resurrection of the dead depends upon the resurrection of Christ. There is a vital and necessary connection between the two. If Christ be not raised then the dead will not rise; "then they which have fallen asleep in Christ are perished." For all the saints who, to human view, die, are fallen asleep in Christ. The apostle still, in the use of this figure of the sowing of grain, is directing our faith to the view of Christ, as the quickening Spirit, as the Resurrection and the Life, without whose resurrection there could be no resurrection of the dead. In the sowing of grain the apostle reminds us that we do not sow that body that shall be. That literal grain or body of wheat that is sown is seen no more, but from it there comes forth a resurrection which shows much more than was sown, yet to the seed is given its own body. This figure of the seed of grain is fulfilled in Christ. The resurrection of his body was a literal resurrection; that is, it came out of the grave just as it was put in. Death and the grave had not been able to make that body see corruption. Thus the sting was taken from death, and the power from the grave, and Jesus became as the grain of wheat that was sown, and became the first fruits of them that slept. Thus the resurrection of the bodies of all the saints was so secured that they are not spoken of as dying, but as falling asleep. Their bodies see corruption, but Jesus is to them the resurrection. They have borne the image of the earthy Adam; now in the resurrection, on account of that seed that was sown, they come forth in the image of the second man, the heavenly. It is in his image that they are raised, not in their own image, not in the image of the body that is sown in corruption, but in the image of Jesus, and fashioned, not like unto his body as it was when nailed to the cross, and when it was raised from the tomb, but like unto his body when he was glorified, "like unto his glorious body." This appears to me to be the apostle's teaching by the figure of the sowing of grain.

The resurrection of the body of every saint is in the resurrection of Christ. This is the great object of the apostle's regard in all this chapter. As regards the time, answering the question, "When are the dead raised?" I have to believe that the resurrection is not a matter of time; it is beyond time. In calling the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, Moses at the bush showed that the dead are raised up: "For God is not the God of the dead, but of the living; for all live unto him."—Luke xx. 37. They who have fallen asleep in Jesus are dead unto us, but they are living unto God in the resurrection. *How else is the resurrection of the dead taught by Moses at the bush?* To us who are yet in time the resur-

rection is yet to be; those who have gone out from time have come into the enjoyment of the eternal and glorious presence of him who said, "I am the resurrection and the life."

MAY 10, 1902.

FRAGMENTS

I HAVE thought that we must regard the body of Jesus as differing in one respect from the body of any other man that ever lived upon the earth, in that it was sinless, and because of that, could see no corruption. "He was made in the *likeness* of men," to be a servant, "and being found in fashion as a man," he became obedient unto death. He was sent forth "in the *likeness* of sinful flesh," but are we to understand from the record that his was sinful flesh? "He was made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." He must be under the law in order to redeem those who were under it. The son is under the same law as his mother, though the father be not under it. If his had been a sinful body, could he have been a proper offering for the sins of his people? Could he have borne their sins if he had been capable of sin himself?

Though he was made of a woman, yet his father was not a man, but God. The angel said, "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." That body was a holy thing. I do not think I can say that the body begotten by the Holy Ghost was a sinful body.

He was made flesh, "made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death." He took part of flesh and blood in order that "through death he might destroy him that had the power of death," and in order that he might be "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," and be "tempted in all points like as we are;" yet in all this he was "without sin." The tempter, the prince of this world, had nothing in him. (John xiv. 30.) "He knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." "He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners." "He was made to be sin for us, who knew no sin."

It was said to Adam, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return," but it was not so said to Jesus. Nor was this true of his body. It could not return to dust, for that would have been to see corruption, and it was written that God's holy One should not be suffered to see corruption. Had his body been sinful he could not have borne the sins of others, for he must have died on his own account, as one of the sinful race of Adam, even though he had not sinned himself, and his body must have seen corruption. But he was undefiled, pure, God's holy One, with no touch or taint or nature of sin in his body. Therefore he could bear the sins of his people, and only the sins of others could cause him to die.

But though the sins of his people could prevail to bring him down into the baptism of death, they could do no more. Their power over

the body ceased when he died, for the law had no further claim. He could not see corruption. When the grave received the dead body of the Son of God, then its power was gone, and in the appointed time that same body must come forth in form and fashion as it went into the grave, to show openly that he had triumphed over both death and the grave. He had "abolished death" by giving it all it could demand under the holy law of God for the sins of his people, and then coming forth from it by the power and glory of the Father. Also by the same glorious resurrection he became the destruction of the grave; so that his people, who in a legal and mystical sense died with him and rose together with him, are forever delivered from death and the grave. "Death hath no more dominion over him" or them.

In the resurrection of Jesus he is said to be born from the dead, and thus to be "the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead," as it was written, "Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee." The sonship of his people is in his Sonship, and they are therefore secure in him. They shall not "die any more; for they are equal unto the angels; and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection."

August, 1902.

FRAGMENTS

We may reason with great apparent power and clearness concerning the doctrine of salvation by grace, and yet find to our surprise, that no convincing force seems to be exerted by our argument upon the one to whom it is addressed. Our theory seems to be correct, yet something is lacking. It is evident that our carnal mind is taking the lead rather than the Spirit of truth. When light contends with darkness the argument is effectual. When the Spirit directs us in our contentions for the truth no mistakes are made, and the words spoken are with power. The air issuing from the mouth of a bellows is of greater force than the breath of a man, but it ceases when the hands stop working; no life is indicated by it. The breathing of a living soul is infinitely better. I have heard and read arguments for the truth that were unanswerable, and yet I had no more comfort in them than I would have had if they had issued from the mouth of an automaton. There seemed no spiritual power in them, but they expressed a light and trifling spirit, and a spirit of bitterness, anger and jealousy was clearly seen behind the carefully chosen words. Again I have heard one talk, or read his writings, who was trying to defend an error, and yet I could see and feel a gentle, truth-loving spirit speaking through the words, and could see that the one speaking, though tangled in a labyrinth of error, was anxious to be right, and was earnestly searching for the truth, and was in a conflict with his own carnal mind more than with any man. I can feel an interest and comfort in conference with such a man, knowing that he really wants the truth, and assured that he will know it in the Lord's good time, and that the truth will make him free.

We may present the clear opposition of the Scriptures to the doctrine of a conditional time salvation, and yet find that not only the hearer or reader, but ourselves also, are left in doubt and perplexity as to the nature of the responsibilities that scripturally appear to rest upon the Lord's people, and as to the true place and meaning of the exhortations, admonitions, commands and reproofs that are given to them, with the stripes, chastening and scourging that their transgressions are visited with. We want whatever theory we present to be consistent with the Scripture, but we are taught that it is not our province to straighten crooked things, nor establish theories concerning salvation in all its parts and breadths and lengths, and concerning the way we come into a knowledge of it.

While one may be wondering if there are really some conditions upon the performance of which God has rested some part of our salvation in time, and has offered some spiritual or temporal blessing as a reward, he may be taught the truth in a plain, convincing way. Some one comes to the church and tells us that he is happy because he is living as he ought to live. He says that because of his good and obedient walk the Lord has rewarded him with joy and peace in his soul. He expresses himself as sure that his comfort and happiness in this respect have been left with himself, and that if he will he can have grace to secure them by walking right, which he is determined to do. Now, while there may seem some semblance of the letter of the truth in this, our hearts at once tell us that this man is deluded, and is resting in vain self-confidence, and is not in all this moved by the Spirit. We know that the Lord's people do not feel that way. They feel their dependence upon the Lord for every right motive, for every good thought, for every right action, and "without him they can do nothing." We know from the Bible, and from our own experience, that the true follower of Christ never feels that he has by any works of his own merited any favor from the Lord. He regards all the favors he receives as given him through mercy and abounding grace, and esteems as the greatest of blessings the grace by which he is enabled to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called.

I NOTICE that every token of the Lord's favor is received by me with surprise. I find myself delightfully surprised when the Lord's people manifest love and fellowship for me, as though I had no right to expect it, and I wonder still more when, as is sometimes the case, I do feel the sweet assurance that this great blessing does truly belong to me. I am surprised every time that a portion of the Lord's written word comes to my mind with power and sweetness, and when there springs up in my soul a feeling of praise and thanksgiving to his holy name. It would almost appear as though I were expecting evidences of his displeasure on account of the evils and disobedience in my heart and life, rather than tokens of pity and love, it is such a wonder and delight to me when those tokens come, and when he sheds his love

abroad in my heart. It is a wonder to me that I have a place in the church; that I am allowed, not to say constrained, to preach the gospel of his grace, and that some of his dear children give me evidence that he blesses that preaching to their profit and comfort. I find myself astonished and very thankful that I desire to give him praise and glory, and to devote myself wholly to his service, and more than astonished when I am assured that he will receive praise and devotion from one so unworthy as I.

Therefore the words of David are very sweet to me when he and the people rejoiced and thanked the Lord because they had offered willingly unto the Lord of all their precious things: "Now therefore, our God, we thank thee and praise thy glorious name. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee. For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding."—1 Chron. xxix. 13-15.

It would be a carnal spirit that would prompt one to offer of his work and gifts unto the Lord with the expectation of being rewarded for them. The Spirit by which David was led moved him to thank and praise the Lord because they were able to offer willingly unto him.

SEPTEMBER, 1902.

THE DAY'S WORK OF JESUS

"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work. As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."—John ix. 4, 5.

By request, I shall endeavor to explain, as the Lord may enable me, the meaning of these words of our dear Savior. As I regard them now, they seem to enlarge and expand, and to reach out over wide fields, comprehending not one subject only, but many subjects. The inquiry concerns particularly the day in which Jesus worked, and the night when no man can work. But there is also to be considered the works which Jesus worked, that they are the works of him who sent him; that he did no works of himself as a man, but that the Father who dwelt in him did the works. (John xiv. 10.) They are the works of "God manifest in the flesh." Also these works of God in the salvation of his people are manifest in this blind man whom Jesus saw as he hid himself from the pharisees, who would have stoned him, and "went out of the temple, passing through the midst of them, and so passed by." This blind man was there, not because of the sins of either himself or his parents, but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. He was born blind, and was there at that particular time, according to the eternal purpose of God.

The day in which Jesus must work the works of him that sent him, I understand to be the time during which he was in the world after he began his ministry, from the time of his baptism by John, till he was

crucified. A man does his work in the field while it is day, from the rising of the sun to the going down of the same. When the night comes he cannot work. So Jesus used this fact as a figure to show not only when his work was to be done, but that it was a work that must be done by him alone, unaided by any man, and that when he had accomplished that work it would be done forever, and that so far as that work, or any work of that kind, is concerned, it would henceforth be night to all the world, when no man can work. The time while he was in the world, engaged in that work, was the day. That work which he was to do, and to fulfill in his suffering, death and resurrection, was manifest in all the miracles he did, and in all his teaching while he was in the world. All power was in his hands then, for the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily in him, and that power was manifest when he healed diseases, made the deaf to hear and the dumb to speak, opened the eyes of the blind, raised the dead, hushed the tempest, bade the raging sea be still, and multiplied a few loaves and fishes, till they satisfied the hunger of thousands of men. Thus he was manifest as the light of the world, all power and knowledge being in him.

During this day, while Jesus was in the world, and was the light of the world, the great work of salvation must be completed, and it must be completed by himself. The works of God in him were done when he died the accursed death of the cross for the sins of his people, and arose for their justification. It was then and in that work that "he finished transgression, made an end of sin, and brought in everlasting righteousness." It was then that he slew the enmity of the law, and secured its favor for his people. It was then that he abolished death, became the destruction of the grave, destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. But in all his works of healing while in the world, this greater work was manifested. In all his encounters with the devil, his power over him was shown in the victory he gained. In raising the dead he displayed the power that he was to gain over death through his own death. Indeed, in this sense his works were finished from the foundation of the world, so that Abel, Eve, Noah and all the Old Testament saints, by faith received the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. In this wonderful, mysterious sense he could say, "Before Abraham was I AM," so that it was given to Abraham to see his day and be glad.

But all this work was his work alone. The patriarchs and prophets, to whose faith he was made known long before he came in the flesh, saw him as the only one who could do that work of salvation, and saw that he had no one of all the people with him to help or uphold, but that his own arm brought salvation unto him. (Isa. lxiii. 5.)

In this glorious work which he worked during the day of his life in the flesh, he saved all his people with an everlasting salvation. When he had finished that work in and by his death, it was and must be night, henceforth and forever upon the earth, as to that work. No

work in the way of salvation from sin can henceforth be done, for he who was the light of the world has gone from the world, having finished that work, and it is now, in that sense, night in the world when no man can work. Those who are not embraced in the work that was done during the working day of Jesus will never know salvation; nor, we can also say, will they ever desire it, or hunger and thirst for righteousness; for Jesus has declared all who thus desire and hunger to be blessed. It will be with those who are not redeemed according to the words of Jesus which John heard: "He that is unjust let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy let him be filthy still." Those represented by the wise virgins went in with Jesus, and were accepted with him, and those represented by the foolish virgins never went in. Their work day, the legal day, is ended, and to them the night is come, when no man can work, while upon the righteous, the Sun of Righteousness has arisen, never more to go down, making for them an everlasting day. But this day of the Lord is night unto his enemies.

However many there be of the redeemed, they are all embraced in the redeeming work which Jesus did while the day of his life in the world lasted. However few there be of those who are not redeemed, they were not embraced in the work of Jesus, and shall not come into his righteousness. Nor do they ever hunger for it, but are haters of that which is good, and lovers of that which is evil.

Now a few thoughts concerning the blind man, and how the works of God were made manifest in him.

Of this particular man it is said that he was blind from his birth. I think he represents one who has received divine life. Some who are blind have once been able to see, but by accident or disease have lost their sight. Such came to Jesus from time to time, asking that their sight might be restored. They knew what things they would see when this blessing should be granted them, for they had seen them before. In each case some spiritual truth was illustrated and taught. But in this case the man had never seen, and could not know the value of the blessing he had never possessed. He did not ask for sight. But he had life, and therefore he hungered and thirsted, and felt all the wants that this life causes. These wants he was powerless to supply, and therefore he sat and begged. So the poor soul who has been given spiritual life, by which he sees himself a sinner in the sight of God, feels the need of spiritual food and water and clothing to supply the wants of that divine life. But as to any way by which those wants can be supplied he is blind. He cannot see what it is he needs, nor how to obtain it. He can only feel the hunger and the thirst and the cold, like a little child, or a lamb, and cry. He begs of all that come by. He does not ask for sight, for of that he knows nothing. He just cries to all that come by, because of the pain of hunger and cold. He is by the wayside. Many that go by try to help him, and he gets enough to keep him alive, alive to still feel the anguish of sin and a longing to be righteous, but nothing more until Jesus comes by, the

persecuted, suffering, sorrowing Jesus. He is sure to come that way at the appointed time. His way lies just there, wherever such a poor, hungry beggar sits, and there is the way that he will surely come. And he comes to every such poor, blind creature from the angry crowds of men who hate his doctrine and his work, and who would persecute him to death. They follow him as far as they can, to prevent any from believing on him, but they cannot keep him away from one poor, sorrowing soul. He hides himself from the raging multitude when he will, and comes softly to the side of the helpless, needy one just at the right time, and manifests the works of God in him.

That this blind man represents the conscious sinner is shown in the conversation of Jesus with the pharisees, recorded at the close of this chapter: "And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind ye should have no sin; but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."

This shows that the ignorance of the natural man is not represented by the blindness of this man, but that he represents the sinner who has been quickened, and who has been made sensible of his condition before God, but is blind to any way of salvation for such a sinner, who is justly condemned. The pharisees were not blind in that sense, for they said, "We see how we can be saved, it is by the works of the law." Now they did not know that by the works of the law no one can be justified, and that was proof that they were yet dead in sin. Their sins remained upon them. Whereas those who are blind, in the sense that Jesus meant, are those who see the true majesty of the law, and the justice of its demands, but cannot see how a sinner can escape its just penalty of death. This blindness as to the way of salvation proves one to be alive, and therefore to be one of the redeemed, whose sins have been atoned for and removed by the death of Christ, and who is in the sight of the law forever free from sin, there being no condemnation to him. It only requires that his eyes shall be opened to see his deliverance from sin and death. What the poor sinner will see when his eyes are opened by the Savior, for the Savior alone can do that work, is just as true before as after his eyes are opened. If those pharisees had been blind in this sense it would have proven them to be alive spiritually, and therefore to have no sin. But they said, We see. Just as the same character today says, "We see clearly how a sinner can be saved. It is only needed that he keep the law. Salvation is offered him upon conditions to be performed by him." This shows them to be still in nature's darkness, and that their sin remaineth upon them.

I do not know that I understand the meaning of the method which Jesus took to open the eyes of this man, but I will present some thoughts upon it. To be born blind was regarded in Israel as a special

curse. Therefore the disciples asked whose sin caused this affliction, and the pharisees referred to this common understanding among them that a blind man was held as abhorred and base, when they said, "Thou wast altogether born in sin, and dost thou teach us?" This blindness represented the curse of sin as felt by the sinner, causing self-abhorrence, with no hope of any deliverance. Now Jesus, to remove that curse of sin, was made sin for his people, and became a curse for them, and endured shame and reproach. It is this shameful death that delivered his people from the curse, and it is only when this is made known to them, and applied to the case of each, that they come to realize and see this wonderful deliverance. Jesus spat upon the ground and made clay of the spittle, and anointed the eyes of the blind man. Spitting expressed contempt, and was to the shame of the one who received it. We may think that the clay made of the dust and the spittle when applied to the eyes represents the application to the poor sinner of the shameful death of Jesus by which the curse of sin is removed. This is applied to the eyes in order that the blindness, which represents the felt curse and shame of sin, may be broken. Now one thing remains to be felt and known, and that is the power of Jesus' word. By that word spoken unto his disciples they are clean, as he said, "Now are ye clean through the words that I have spoken unto you." There is a "washing of water by the word." The power of Jesus' word, as risen from the dead, must be felt, working obedience in the heart, and bringing us into sweet conformity to his will. So he said to the blind man, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam." Immediately the interpretation of the name of that pool is given, which to my understanding presents the key to the subject. "Which is by interpretation, Sent." Here is the felt power of Jesus' word. Here is the experience of obedience to his blessed will and word, and the acting out of that obedience thus wrought within by his holy power. Here are the works of God made manifest in this poor beggar, blind from his birth. "He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing." How far he had to go, I do not know; it is of no importance. We read of no one leading him; it was not necessary. The interpretation of the name of the pool shows how he went: he was SENT. The power of Jesus' word sent him. He could not fail to go, nor go amiss, for Jesus SENT him. Men TRY to send, but may fail. Jesus never fails; he cannot fail; he sends, and obedience to his will is certain and absolute. And in that spirit of holy obedience to the sweet power and will of Jesus the cleansing of sight is felt, and the deliverance from sin is experienced.

He came seeing, but Jesus was no longer there. What solemn gladness is in that astonished soul! but he does not know who healed him, only that he was "a man that was called Jesus." He must wait awhile, and have some blessed but trying experiences to try the work of God in him before he shall know that Jesus is the Son of God. He must tell the truth concerning the opening of his eyes, before his

neighbors and to the pharisees, and thus honor and exalt the name of Jesus whom they hate. He must be separated from his father and mother, and be cast out of the synagogue, and be left alone in the world, before he shall know by whom he has received this blessing, and what great things it means for him. But the blessing is his, and his soul cannot but rejoice as he comes into conflict with the religious world because of it. How his voice rings in our souls as he says, "Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was once blind, now I see." What wonderful words are these, and how they have been taken up by thousands and thousands since then to tell the wonders that have been done in them, and the glorious assurance that now they do see the wonderful works of God, whether they belong to them or not. "Whereas I was once blind, now I see." He did not know till now to what he was blind. Now the untold beauties and wonders of a new world burst upon his view. No need to argue with one whose eyes Jesus has opened, for he knows that he now sees, and he is wonderingly absorbed and delighted in what he sees. The truth that his salvation is of God is clear and unquestionable in his soul. He cannot divide the praise with any, nor does it occur to him to claim any part of the credit for himself. His going to the pool of Siloam and washing was just as much the work of God as the putting of clay upon his eyes.

But after all there is a sadness in being alone, separated from friends and acquaintances, even from father and mother, and cast out by those who represent all the religion he has ever known up to this time. He cannot cease to speak of Jesus as a good man, and the opening of his eyes as a work done by the will and power of God. But he feels his loneliness.

It is just then that Jesus finds him, and asks him that question that stirs up all his wondering soul with tender longing: "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" Remember he has never until now seen the face of Jesus, but he addresses him with the solemn reverence that is born of God, and shows a knowledge of Jesus in his soul deeper than he himself understands. He answers, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" O, what thousands of men and women and children there are in this world of sorrow who are feeling just that way; who have just that longing desire, that hungering to know of the Son of God, that they may believe on him.

Here they stand together, the man whose eyes are opened, and Jesus who opened them, but the man does not know him. Yet he has felt the touch of his soft hand, and has heard and obeyed his precious, powerful voice. And now he stands looking into that heavenly face, expecting, hoping, loving, and asking of him as no poor soul could ask of anybody else, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" And then Jesus tells him, as he also tells you, my dear brother, sister, child, "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee." Then he knew, then you know. Your past experience is brought to your

mind. You remember it may be when you first saw, when you first knew the way of salvation by grace, perhaps years ago, though you did not know that you were one of the redeemed. But how differently you have felt ever since that wonderful experience, and how differently you have talked. A new world has been opened to your view, and it has been a comfort to look upon the things of the kingdom of God, even though you could not know that you had an interest in them. And now what a comfort it is to look into that dear face and ask, in deepest humility, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" He does not describe him, does not tell you to go here or there to find him; does not tell you to do this or that to gain his favor, but just turns you to your own experience. "Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee."

NOVEMBER 6, 1902.

FRAGMENTS

IT SEEMS a sad thing to read in the Scriptures that all flesh is grass, and all the glory of man as the flower of the field. It appears to present a good cause for sadness. But there is a time when it causes unspeakable joy to find that the Scriptures do declare this as a solemn truth. That time is when we have found this to be true concerning ourselves; when we have come to the sad conclusion that we are of no more value than the grass; that all our goodness and glory are no more substantial than the flower of the field, fading as quickly and withering away. When also we feel our grief aggravated by the conviction that it is all our own fault; that it might have been otherwise if we had been more diligent, and more faithful. We feel altogether to blame; feel that we have neglected golden opportunities for improvement, and have brought ourselves to this wretched condition of nothingness. What self-reproach and self-loathing! We see ourselves as "less than nothing and vanity," and our own vile and depraved hearts and ways the cause.

Then what a change comes over our feelings, what a brightening of our gloomy minds, what a soft and holy comfort in our hearts, as we read that this is true of *all* flesh; true of "every man in his best state," as well as in his most debased condition. "For all flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand forever."—Isaiah xl. 7, 8; 1 Peter i. 24, 25.

Then is it possible that while this is true of all the race of Adam, only those realize and know it upon whom the Spirit of the Lord has blown; that these are they who have been born of the Spirit; who have felt the quickening power of that Spirit, which is the heavenly wind blowing upon them. "The wind bloweth where it listeth," and they have heard the sound thereof, but could not tell whence it came

or whither it went. They felt its terrible power withering the flesh, as grass, and causing its glory to fade as the flower of grass, but had no thought that this ruin and desolation were evidences of God's blessing and heavenly favor.

Now, instead of gloom, and regret, and sorrow, and self-reproach, there are gladness, and thanksgiving, and praise. We are thankful for the very bitterness of the wormwood and gall, and for the humility they wrought in us, as these are evidences that the Lord has brought us up out of the dust of death, and has become our salvation. Now as we come up out of the darkness, desolation and grief, we find the one thing of value, the one thing which can never fail or change, the word of the Lord, which shall endure forever. Here is our hope and joy.

"And this," says the apostle Peter, "is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." This is the word of God's salvation. It is the Word which was in the beginning with God, and was God, and was made flesh and dwelt among us. It is preached by the gospel; it is the fullness of the gospel; it is that which causes the gospel to be glad tidings; it is Jesus, "the wisdom of God and the power of God." All that we can ever need is in him, for he is "full of grace and truth," and all is ours if we have ever felt this heavenly wind which causes the flesh to wither as the grass, and its glory to fade as the flower of grass.

SOME ONE has said that in most of our cities God's humble poor have not the gospel preached to them. But Jesus said, "The poor have the gospel preached to them." How good it is to remember that the Lord, and not man, has charge of this matter. Wherever they are the promise of God shall be fulfilled to God's humble poor: "Bread shall be given them and their waters shall be sure."

WHEN engaged in preaching, and especially when the power of the Word is felt in my soul, I cannot think of my manner of speaking, nor am I conscious at such a time of any wish to produce an effect upon the audience by oratory, or by anything but the plain presentation of the truth of the gospel in the subject under contemplation. But at other times I have wished I might so improve in my manner of speaking, and be able to present my subject so attractively as to hold my audience in absorbed interest. Once, while thinking thus, and wondering why I had not paid more attention to this matter, and why I should not be as interesting and attractive a preacher as others I knew personally and by reputation, I resolved to make the attempt to improve in this respect, by bringing to my aid such knowledge of literature as I had. I would try to embellish my subject by illustrations historical and otherwise, and to improve in oratory, so as to produce a strong and pleasing effect upon those to whom I should speak. "Yes," I said to myself, "I will do this; I will remember this

when I stand up to preach tomorrow." For I had always forgotten, when I arose in the pulpit, to pay any attention to rules of oratory, to any possible helps from literature, or to anything but telling as plainly and as quickly as possible my thoughts and feelings concerning the subject on my mind.

That night I dreamed I was fishing, and at one point in my dream I stood with my hook in my left hand not baited, while in my right hand I held a piece of mince pie. Suddenly the thought came that I would bait my hook with the pie; then instantly I said to myself, "Fish will not eat mince pie," and at once I threw it away. My eye followed it as it left my hand, and saw it go into the open mouth of a dog that stood waiting near. Then I awoke, and I saw that the day before I had decided to try to draw men by something well represented by the mince pie, which would only attract and feed the flesh.

My desire is to preach as with the ability that God giveth, and to be contented with that. No part of the true power is in the manner of the preacher, nor is any part of the true spiritual effect produced by eloquence of speech, nor by any natural ability or learning that he may possess. The power is in the Word, in the message. "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of man." When we think of a messenger bringing good tidings, we can easily see how all the power is in the message, and all the effect is produced by that. If one were about to receive the execution of a just sentence of death, and if he felt the crime a greater grief and terror to him than the punishment he was about to receive, and if one should be sent to tell him that not only was the punishment remitted, but the crime itself was removed, and he washed whiter than snow, how little would he feel like criticising the messenger's manner of speech. He would not complain that the man's ignorance made him a tedious speaker, nor express a wish to have a more learned and eloquent man sent to speak to him. He would be likely to say of him, "He is the best and sweetest preacher I ever heard."

I COUNT it a great blessing when the Lord makes me willing to endure hardship and affliction with patience, and without murmuring. I count it a great favor when I am enabled to keep down my unruly disposition, give the soft answer to harsh and cruel words, that turneth away wrath, and so to walk as becometh the gospel of Christ. I have learned by sad experience that I cannot claim the credit to myself for any self-denial, or for the exercise of any grace of the Spirit. It is clearly manifest to me that it is only by the grace and power of God that there is any overcoming of any of the evil propensities of my depraved nature, or that there is any good thing done or spoken by me. Often I know that it is contrary to will that the good thing is said or done, and the evil thing suppressed. Grace has reigned so that self is forced to be denied. Truly "the weapons of our war-

fare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

NOVEMBER 14, 1902.

ROMANS XI. 25

For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in.

Concerning the wonderful mystery expressed by the apostle in Romans xi. 25, I have to say that it looks to me very deep and unsearchable. I cannot fathom it. I have some thoughts upon the subject, but do not know that I will have strength to try to express them. What is written in the text is inseparably connected with all the rest of the chapter, and the preceding chapter.

In all of this connection the apostle is keeping in view Israel as a nation, while he still teaches the doctrine of election, and of salvation by grace without the works of the law. While he keeps Israel after the flesh in view, with the advantages of the Jew, and what pertained to them (Rom. iii. 1; ix. 4, 5), and his desire for them as his kinsmen according to the flesh, he yet brings to view Israel after the Spirit all the way through, as it were, a nation within a nation, so that he can say, "God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew." This he illustrates strikingly by referring to the seven thousand which the Lord reserved to himself in the midst of the nation of Israel, in the days of Elijah. These were made to see that to which all the rest of Israel were blinded. It was not, however, as fleshly Israelites that these seven thousand obtained that righteousness which all Israel were professedly seekers after, but as the election of grace. It was not God's purpose that any should know him by wisdom (1 Cor. i. 21), and it is in this sense that he is said to have blinded Israel, that they should not see the way of righteousness by their natural understanding, nor obtain it by the works of the law.

But (eleventh verse), "Have they stumbled that they should fall?" Was it a kind of accident, or haphazard step of theirs, which with due care they might have avoided? How closely and carefully the apostle keeps all the threads of this wonderful argument in hand. The weaving he does can never be raveled out.

The fall of Israel as a fleshly people was according to the purpose of God, that there might be salvation for the Gentiles. If salvation could come to one Israelite because he was of the flesh of Abraham, then no Gentile could be saved, for the promise was to Abraham and his seed. But the apostle, while still keeping Israel as a nation in view, shows here as elsewhere that not the children of the flesh of Abraham, but the children of the promise, are counted for the seed. Still regarding Israel as having received the promise through Abraham, who

is the root bearing up the olive tree and its branches, the apostle speaks of those Israelites who did not believe as having been cut off. This, according to the figure he is using, would leave place for some Gentiles to come in, by grafting, so as to fill up the place of the original branches, and receive the root and fatness of the olive tree; or in other words, receive the promises made to Abraham and his seed, not as Gentiles, but as children of Abraham, and heirs according to the promise, as Isaac was. (Gal. iii. 29; iv. 28.)

The fall, then, of Israel, and the diminishing of them, shows a way of salvation for the Gentiles, and is therefore the riches of the Gentile world. Then the apostle widens the argument gradually, showing the possibility of receiving again those natural branches which were cut off and cast away because of unbelief, "if they abide not still in unbelief." But they must come in by grafting, and on the same principle of goodness and mercy which brought the Gentiles in. The Gentiles are warned against highmindedness and boasting, as though they were brought in because they were better than the Jews who had been cast away because of unbelief. They are no better. "Because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear. If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee."

In the twenty-fourth verse the apostle refers again to the figure of grafting, the only place where this figure is used in the Bible, so far as I remember. In former years I occasionally heard people speak of grafting into Christ, as though the apostle was representing by this figure how sinners are savingly united with Christ. But a little careful attention will make it plain that he does not speak of grafting in that sense. The olive tree is undoubtedly used here to represent the covenant made with Abraham and his seed, and the Israelites who stand in the natural view as heirs of that covenant and its promises. Because of unbelief some of the branches were broken off, and the Gentiles, as branches of a wild olive tree, are grafted into this good olive tree; that is, are given faith to believe and receive as theirs the promises made to Abraham, for these promises are the root and fatness of the tree.

A graft bears it own fruit. It is therefore taken from a good tree and put into a tree whose fruit was not good, to make the tree bear good fruit. This shows that grafting could not illustrate the union of sinners with Christ, for by that figure the sinner as a graft would bear the same evil fruit as before. But here it is a branch from a wild olive that is grafted into the good olive tree, in order that the branch thus grafted may be benefited by the fatness of the root. The good tree makes this graft good.

Now the apostle calls attention to how easily the branches once broken from the good olive tree may be grafted into their own olive tree again. But it is noticeable that if they are again joined to their own tree it will be by grafting, the same as the Gentiles.

Then the peculiar words of the text, "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." Israel is still openly regarded by the apostle as the nation, the descendants of Abraham according to the flesh, "to whom were committed the oracles of God," and "to whom pertained the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever."—Rom. iii. 1; ix. 1-5. Some of them did not believe, "but shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?" "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God." Some did believe, and these believing Israelites are regarded by the apostle, in the use of this figure, as still of the nation of Israel, as still branches remaining upon the good olive tree, which waits to be filled up with Gentile believers, the fullness of the Gentiles, the elect among all people, who shall come and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and be "no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints."

"And so all Israel shall be saved." This is rather sudden and startling, is it not? Then none of the branches that were cut off shall be finally lost, but all be grafted in again, with all the believing Gentiles. Is that what the apostle means? It would seem so. The apostle has been hurrying along to this grand and blessed truth that all Israel shall be saved; has been waiting anxiously for the time when he would be ready to say it. He has expressed unusually strong desires that all Israel might be saved. (Rom. ix. 1-3, x. 1.) He has intimated the truth of the mystery at times, by saying, "For they are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children, but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."—Rom. ix. 6-8. Then again he has spoken of the seven thousand hidden ones as the chosen remnant, and has also said, "Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for, but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded."

And now the full, clear note of heavenly gospel music is sounded by the apostle, "And so all Israel shall be saved;" and the spiritual Israel comes forth in our view, out of Egypt, up through the Red Sea, out of the wilderness, over Jordan, under the leadership of our spiritual Joshua, into the promised gospel land, "As it is written, There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob."

Now the wonderful mystery begins to open up, so that the secret of the Lord is manifest as with us. Israel after the flesh now begins to disappear, and we see none saved upon that ground. "By the works

of the law shall no flesh be justified." For the Gentiles' sake, then, the fleshly Israelites are counted enemies, and so there is a door of mercy opened to those who were aliens because of the unbelif of the Jews as such. But as touching the election those same people who are cut off because of unbelief are beloved for the Father's sake, and shall be made to rejoice in the same mercy which brought the Gentiles in.

So now the secret is opened up, and it is indeed a glorious secret, which is with them that fear the Lord, to whom now he will show his covenant. It is not on account of belief, then, nor of relationship to Abraham after the flesh, nor on account of any works of the creature, nor of any personal merit, that any are saved, but through mercy. "For God hath concluded them all," both Jews and Gentiles, "in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." So all that the apostle has been talking about, all the branches that were broken off because of unbelief, and the branches of the wild olive that were grafted in, all are of that Israel who shall all be saved through mercy. Yes, mercy opens a wide and beautiful door to every poor, mourning soul who sees in himself no merit. Every one who feels that he is justly cut off from all hope, who has no power to believe that he can be one of the Lord's redeemed; every one who feels to be an "alien from the common wealth of Israel and a stranger from the covenant of promise; without God and without hope in the world;' every such one is among those whom mercy takes up, and who shall through mercy be made joyful in God's house of prayer.

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song." Well may we break out with the apostle in words of sublime adoration and praise, and say, "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out."

JANUARY 28, 1903.

FRAGMENTS

As I WALKED along to my appointment yesterday morning I felt for a little while very clearly my earthiness, my separateness from spiritual things; not that my thoughts and feelings were sinful, foolish, lustful after worldly things, as at other times, but simply earthy. I was thinking of the relationships of this life with the anxieties, cares and pleasures that are connected with them, of sicknesses of dear ones with the dreads that attend them; of worldly needs and how they will be supplied; of the green grass in lawns and fields, and the beauty of flowers; of "the things that are seen" connected with churches, meetings and preaching, and of my own duty to preach that morning, the time of which was so near at hand, and whether I could think of a suitable text that I knew anything about, and whether I knew anything about any Scripture as I ought to know, and whether I could preach so as to do myself any justice, and whether I should be able to preach so as to interest the people, and even if I did interest them whether it would

do them any spiritual good. And then it seemed as though all my thoughts and feelings were simply "of the earth earthy," and that I was "looking at the things that are seen," and not thinking of the glory of God, and that I had no power to think of that and desire that alone.

I saw that in nature the heavens touch the earth and communicate with it, and give to it of their blessings, the sunshine, the rain, the dew, and the elements of the air which call forth the herbs and grass and flowers and fruits, and I said in my mind, "Can the spiritual heavens ever touch me again and communicate with me, and give me to feel their power, and to receive of their goodness? Will they come down to me ever again?" Then I think my soul cried unto the Lord that the heavens might touch me, that I might feel their holy power controlling me, and that I might receive once more their pure and sweet communications. Thus the earth cried unto the heavens, where the blessed Sun of Righteousness has his tabernacle, (Psalms xix. 4,) and the heavens heard the earth, and sent down into my poor, darkened and hungry soul some precious healing and reviving beams of light, some sweet promises, and some of that doctrine which drops like the rain, and this gave me spiritual power to hear the corn and the wine and the oil which God, I humbly trust, had long ago sowed within me, and now these tokens of heavenly blessing heard obediently "Jezreel," *(God soweth)* and came into manifestation for my present help and comfort. "And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth, and the earth shall hear the corn and the wine and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel."—Hosea ii. 21, 22.

"And I will sow her unto me in the earth." Thus it is in the flesh that our God is manifest, and down in what sometimes seems to be the dark depths of our hearts the wonderful and mysterious exercises go on, which are the experience of our betrothal unto Christ as our heavenly Husband. Thus we feel from time to time the vileness and nothingness of the flesh, and seem to hear the Lord saying unto us, "You are not my people." Then we cry and mourn, until in the Lord's good time the mystery which was hidden from ages and from generations, is anew made manifest unto us in the riches of its glory, which is, "Christ in you the hope of glory."—Col. i. 27. So in the very place where it was said unto us, Ye are not my people, there it is said, Ye are sons of the living God. (Hosea i. 10.)

I read that morning to the people the second chapter of Paul's letter to the Philippians, and felt glad to see and to speak of how in this chapter, as in all the Scriptures, the inspired writer shows the heavens constantly and always touching and communicating with the earth.

Here in our flesh, in a world of sin and sorrow and sickness, in the midst of cares and pain and grief, the holy communications of heavenly favor and love come to us, the laws and ordinances of our heavenly Husband are felt to be over, around and upon us, as the heavens are

over, around and upon the earth, and our responses to these sweet commands and promises and assurances of love are called forth in prayers and praises and thanksgiving.

When God worketh in us to will, and has not yet worked in us to do, we are in a sad, desolate, self-loathing condition. Our desires then are to do that which is good and absolutely free from selfishness and sin, but "how to perform that which is good we find not." It may give us a little rest from trouble to know that the apostle Paul expressed the same condition concerning himself, but it will not drive the trouble away. The things that we *would* do, that we have a desire for, we do not think we have any right to do. "We would but cannot pray;" "we would but cannot repent." We feel not merely that we cannot say the words of prayer, but the words, in our mouth, would not be prayers. It seems that it is not our right to pray; it is not our right and privilege to repent; it does not belong to us to be baptized. We have no right to the promises and commands and blessings of the gospel. These things belong to the Lord's people. But when the Lord "works in us *to do,*" then we realize a sacred mystery. We have done these things, and yet have not done them. They have been done in and for us. We take the works of Jesus as ours; we walk in them; they are wrought in us, and it now becomes a blessed privilege to work them out, to manifest them openly in our walk and conversation.

How wonderfully the apostle here comes along the road we have trodden, reminds us of our "consolation in Christ" in past days, of our comfort of love and of the mercies of God, and before we are aware we seem to be telling ourselves how we ought to be of one mind, seek the things of others, and not our own, and so manifest in what we say and do the mind that was in Christ Jesus, which the same apostle says we have. (1 Cor. ii. 16.) The humility of the mind of Christ is spoken of as it is manifest in his coming under the law, making himself of no reputation, and becoming obedient to all its demands against his people, even to the shameful death of the cross. Then his exaltation above every name, so that everything in heaven and in earth and under the earth bows the knee in acknowledging allegiance to his name and obedience to his will.

What power the sun has in the heavens, and what power the heavens have over the earth. Oh, that this great, broad, high atmosphere of the truth of God might come down to me and enfold me, and enlighten and enrich my soul with its holy power. Oh, that my thoughts and desires might continually reach up into the infinite depths of those gospel heavens, even to the Sun of Righteousness, whose circuit is from one end of the heavens to the other, and whose heat and light reach throughout its whole extent. My desire is that those heavenly powers and blessings might so control this earthly nature of mine that holy things may grow out of it, and be manifest in my life; that the corn and the wine and the oil might come forth from the depths of

my soul, where God, I hope, has sowed them, and so the life and blessings of Jesus be manifest in my mortal flesh; that I might have the assurance that God is working in me to will and to do, and so feel it my blessed privilege to work out in my daily life and walk my own salvation so graciously wrought in me, and so render obedience to his holy will.

What wonderful control the heavens have over the earth, which lies so helplessly, so quietly, so passively and obediently under their power. What precious fruits are brought forth out of the earth's bosom by the Sun, which has his tabernacle in them. As the earth lies under that glorious heavenly control, and is responsive to it, so the Lord's people, the new earth, lie under the power of Jesus, "whose glory covers the heavens." "He comes down upon them like rain, and as showers that water the earth." Then his sunshine warms them into sweet obedience, and the plants of his grace are put forth, and the flowers appear on the earth, and the precious fruits of the Spirit are perfected.

And they are ready to "do all things without murmurings and disputings," working out their salvation with fear and trembling. There certainly are times when this vile, rebellious nature of ours is held under control by the Spirit, and we have a little rest from its troublesome disputings and murmurings. Much of our time we are mourning and worrying because we are so vile, or else because we cannot have our own way. With some this sad, rebellious winter state of the soul seems to continue much of their time. But there are times when they can feel that this command is upon this unruly nature: "The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him."

MAY, 1903.

A DEAR sister has just told me a circumstance which presents a most striking example of the wonderful power of grace. Her husband's nephew had a number of children; one of them, from the first that he could manifest his disposition, was one of the worst children she ever saw. He was ugly in disposition, ill-natured, and awfully profane in his language. No one could tell how he ever learned the oaths he used, as his father did not make use of profane language at all. His mother said she thought it was born in him. He would never wait for the rest at table, would not mind, and would not go to Sunday School. His quick and strong intellectual powers enabled him to constantly invent new forms of michief. When he was about five years old she visited them, and noticed a great change in him. He no longer used any bad language. His people had noticed this, but they did not think of it as important. They made no profession of religion, and his father did not believe in religion. They had simply noticed and remarked upon this outward change. He loved music, and was much of the time whistling or singing hymns. He was very patient, never complained, waited for the rest at table, was obedient, and without being spoken to about it asked his mother if she would make him ready for Sunday

School. When he returned he was repeating verses of hymns and portions of Scripture. His countenance showed the change, it looked so peaceful, mild and loving. Sister Tomlinson, who told me of this, asked him: "Frankie, whatever has come over you that you are so different?" "Why, the good Man," he said, and this touched her so that she could not say any more then. She told her husband she did not think the child could live long. The change was so great as to be truly wonderful. He was as much better than an ordinary child as he had been worse before.

In about four months from this time he was taken sick and died. No one who understood spiritual things was with him. His mother thought that if there was any religion he had it. He would talk to his sister, and repeat portions of Scripture. He told her he had seen his little brother who had died, and that he was going home. How interesting it would have been to have heard what he could have said concerning this change. These things are "hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes."—Matt. xi. 25.

NOVEMBER 2, 1884.

WHO is it that follows Christ? What is the path in which he went? How can one follow him? His was a path of suffering, of shame and of reproach. He had not where to lay his head. "He was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners," and yet was most deeply and sorely afflicted on account of sin—the sins of others. "His visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men." He was feeble and sore broken. His soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. "He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." He was finally crucified. And he said, "Except a man deny himself, take up his cross and follow me, he cannot be my disciple." One decides to follow Christ, sets out to do so, as he thinks, and complacently regards himself as a disciple, a Christian, and yet has never seen Christ, and knows nothing of the path of suffering and self-denial in which he went during all his life. How many such professed followers of Jesus there are in the world, proud, self-confident, self-satisfied, to whom the suffering Jesus is a stranger, and who would be among his revilers if he were here in the flesh.

Another feels a desire to follow Jesus, and sets out to do so, but cannot find the way. Again and again he tries, but seeks in vain for the way. He cannot get away from the path of sin, for he finds that he is all sin. Sin has a hold upon him, and the law is the strength of sin, so that he cannot get away. He cannot get into the path of holiness, for he is all unholy. He finds his strength is weakness, his wisdom foolishness, and his righteousness filthy rags. Finally he gives up, and feels that he must be lost—that he is already lost, and justly, too. He can find no foundation in himself upon which to rest a hope, and nothing in the world upon which he can rely.

Now, just when he has become entirely discouraged in his efforts to follow Jesus, when he has lost all hope that he can ever come near to the holy One, he is upon the right road. How strange such an assertion would seem to him at such a time. Nevertheless it is true. He is now following him who went down to the depths of suffering on account of our sins, who was bruised for our iniquities. The fear of the Lord, which has been put into his heart, and which "is to hate evil," has made him hate himself, and hunger after righteousness. He sinks down, as Jesus sank down, in deep waters of affliction, and as he follows him into the depths, so he rises with him to walk in newness of life. As he still follows him in suffering in the flesh, so he shall follow him in the joys of his kingdom.

The following of Jesus is all by faith, whether it be following him in sorrow or in joy; in feeling the waves and billows of the Lord go over us, or in feeling the sweet, mysterious power of his resurrection; in receiving the reproaches of the world, or in feeling the answer of a good conscience and the testimonies of the Lord that we please him; all is by faith. And in all our works in the church, in obeying the commands of Jesus, and in all our self-denial and bearing the cross, and in our experience of the sufferings of Christ abounding in us, and of our consolation also abounding by Christ; in all of this we are followers of him only by faith; "for we walk by faith and not by sight." Therefore, so far as we do follow Jesus we are faithful followers of him.

June 23, 1903.

A DAY'S JOURNEY AND A NIGHT'S DREAM

(Genesis xxviii. 10-12.)

"And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and went toward Haran." How far he went that first day we are not told. A man in the excited state of mind that he was in would walk rapidly, and starting early in the morning, as he undoubtedly did, by the time the sun went down he was a good distance from his father's house. It is with that first day's journey and the night that followed it that I have to do.

Jacob had obtained the blessing which his father intended for Esau. His father had also confirmed the blessing after he discovered the deceit which had been practiced upon him, and had sent Jacob away on his present journey to the former home of his mother to get a wife. So far we may regard the circumstances attending this journey as favorable, and such as would cause him to begin it with elation of mind. But other things tinge the circumstances with the blackness of night, and tend to make this journey notable through all time for fear, self-reproach, shame and misery. Fear of his brother Esau, who felt that Jacob had wronged him, and who had threatened to kill him, undoubtedly hastened his departure early in the morning, and caused him to make all possible speed. This threat of Esau caused fearful forebodings on the part of Jacob, both on this day, and on his journey home twenty years after.

But there was something for Jacob to think about much more fearful than this threat of Esau; his falsehods to his old, blind father. How they must have come up before him in all their hideous monstrosity, and repeated themselves in his mind as he walked along until he was sick unto death with their loathsomeness. He had done Esau no wrong, for he had purchased the birthright and paid the full price which was asked for it. Esau of course wanted it back, and would have taken it notwithstanding the fair bargain he had made with his brother in disposing of it. But as between him and Jacob he had no right to that birthright.

But the cunning deceit Jacob had used toward his father, and the falsehoods he had told, in order to obtain the birthright blessing, how these must have stung him as they kept flying about like hornets in his mind, and made him cringe with shame and self-loathing as he walked along. Even if he did not yet feel the full sinfulness before the Lord of his deceitfulness, yet he must have felt that such things showed him to be a mean, contemptible man, utterly untrustworthy. How ashamed he must have felt as he kept thinking over that never-to-be-forgotten interview between himself and his father: "Who art thou, my son?" "And Jacob said unto his father, I am Esau thy first-born; I have done according as thou badest me: arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me." And then, when his father asked, "How is it that thou hast found it so quickly, my son?" with what shameful irreverence and hypocritical audacity he used the name of the Lord, saying, "Because the Lord thy God brought it to me." And the false covering of his hands and neck which met his suspicious father's hands when he felt of him to see whether he was his very son Esau or not. Then must have came up to his mind as he continued on his journey his guilty, cowering attitude as his father said, while again he took his hand, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." What now if after all this deceitful work his father should be given sight to see who it was that stood thus before him? He still shrinks and trembles as he walks along, thinking of that scene, although he has seen his father, and felt his hands upon him since he came to know all that had been done to him by his wife and son. Then again the blind father asked with increased solemnity, "Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am." Then after having eaten of the savoring meat of his son, and drank wine from his hand, and smelled his garments, which were Esau's, and kissed him, he said what he could not have said of Esau, for it was not true of him, "See, the smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed."

The apostle says, "By faith Isaac blessed Jacob and Esau concerning things to come." The faith of Isaac was not at fault, but his natural mind was. He thought he was blessing Esau, but his faith took hold of God's thoughts, and led him to use words that expressed God's purpose. And shall we say that in all of this transaction God's purpose was being fulfilled? Certainly. What else could we say?

And shall we say that Rebecca's deceit and Jacob's falsehoods were embraced in the predestination of God? Certainly. Were they not all links in the one chain of events? What part could have been left out of this chain? What part was predestinated, if all was not? Shall we say then that if God predestinated the sinful actions of men, then why should they be blamed and punished for them? Let Paul answer. After speaking of God's purpose concerning Jacob and Esau, and concerning Pharaoh, he says, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?"— Romans ix. 11-21. And again, "But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) God forbid. For then how shall God judge the world? For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner? And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just."—Romans iii. 5-8.

We know that no lie is to be excused, much less justified. A lie is always sinful. All sin is hateful to God. Yet we know also that nothing can ever have transpired which was contrary to God's purpose; otherwise he would not be God. We are told that he "DECLARED the end from the beginning." We are told in his word that the wicked are his sword, and men of the world his hand, and that the wrath of man shall praise him. "Not Gabriel asks the reason why, nor God the reason gives." He says to us, "Your ways are not my ways, neither are my thoughts your thoughts." We cannot limit the Lord, nor charge evil against him.

So we will go on with Jacob as he plods wearily along toward that "certain place" to which it was the Lord's purpose to bring him to spend such a night as he had never spent before. He has lost some of the strength and vigor of the morning, and the harrassed condition of his mind, and the shame and self-abhorrence that were increasing upon him, no doubt contributed to that weariness which rendered him unfit to travel any further that night. He had sinned grievously against his father, and against the Lord. He could not excuse himself by charging it against his mother. He was seventy-five years of age at the time, and must bear the blame of his own acts.

What was said between him and his father at their last interview concerning his deceit we are not told. Both must have been deeply humbled before each other and before the Lord; Jacob because his blind father was now aware of all his deceitful acts and words, and Isaac because it was now plain to him that his wishes and purposes had been contrary to the purposes of the Lord, and that what Jacob and his mother had done so wickedly had brought to light God's pur-

pose, and contributed to its fulfillment. He had loved Esau because he did eat of his venison, but now he became aware that God had not loved him, but had loved Jacob. Rebecca had been told this before the children were born, and she loved Jacob. Isaac had learned this solemn truth when Esau stood before him with the savory meat after Jacob had received the blessing and gone out. "And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? Where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it to me, and I have eaten of all before thou camest, and have blessed him? yea, and he shall be blessed." This was the time when Isaac knew that the Lord's ways and thoughts were not his. It was so with Abraham; he said, "O, that Ishmael might live before thee;" but God had purposed that the free woman should have a son, and that in Isaac his seed should be called. Truly our ways are not God's ways. Esau's exceeding bitter cry availed nothing. His repeated and pitiful question and request, "Hast thou but one blessing? Bless me, even me also, O my father," were touching, but they were the expression of only fleshly and selfish desires.

I remember when about fourteen years old wondering why Jacob, who was the one the Lord loved, was left to act so wickedly, and appeared to be more dishonest and sinful than Esau, and the answer that came to my mind then was, that it was to show that the elect of God were not any better by nature than the rest of mankind; that they were not chosen and loved because of any goodness or merit in themselves. I can see no other reason to-day.

So Isaac and Jacob are together the last time before Jacob's departure, and it must have been a most solemn interview, as each one saw himself a short-sighted, sinful man, and saw with wonder and self-abasement the manifestations of the wonderful purposes of the Lord. Isaac seems to have no word of reproach for Jacob. He sees him as the one the Lord has chosen to receive the blessing of Abraham, and to "inherit the land in which he was then a stranger, which God gave to Abraham," and he pronounces that blessing upon him, and sends him away to his mother's native land. He can well leave him to the teaching of the Lord concerning his depraved and sinful nature.

And Jacob has come into "a desert land," and into "a waste howling wilderness," where the Lord had appointed to find him. (Deut. xxxii. 10.) He represents all that people whom the Lord hath redeemed, who in their fleshly nature are called Jacob. "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore THEY shall come and sing in the height of Zion."—Jer. xxxi. 11, 12. The Lord brings all these with weeping, and leads them with supplication. They see enough of sin and vileness in themselves to cause weeping and supplication. They start out, as Jacob did, strong and courageous, in the morning of the natural day, with a definite and desirable object in view. They go forward with zeal toward the land that holds for them all they want. They seem to be traveling at their own will,, and in their own strength, and to be urged

on and animated by the desirable objects which they plainly see before them. But the Lord is leading them, and this first day's journey of Jacob represents the day's journey of all that greater Jacob, all the elect of God, when the Lord brings them away from the world, away from any confidence in themselves, and causes them to see themselves as justly condemned sinners in the sight of a holy God.

By the light of the natural sun Jacob traveled on until that sun was set; then he must tarry where he was. In that desert land he could find only stones for his pillows. "And he took of the stones of that place for his pillows." Now he is indeed alone and desolate. When his grandfather Abram sent his servant over this same road to get a wife for Isaac he sent him in such state, and with such show of wealth, as became a prince. But Jacob is alone and poor. He has left all his worldly wealth behind him. Twenty years after this, when he was returning with wealth and a large family and many servants, he said, "With my staff I passed over this Jordan, and now I am become two bands."

This day's journey of Jacob shows how the Lord brings all of his Jacobs to know that their sinful hearts are a desert and a wilderness, where no plant of righteousness grows, and "where beasts of midnight howl." He brings them to the place where all natural light and wisdom fail them, and they can go no farther. He brings them to see the law of God holy, and themselves condemned by it, and for good cause. He causes them to feel that the glory of God is manifested in "the ministration of death written and engraven in stones."

The stones of that place are hard and uncomfortable pillows, but these lonely Jacobs have nothing else to rest upon but their attempts to fulfill the law "written and engraven in stones." They are in a sad and doleful condition; all is dark, and hope seems to have gone down with the sun; no light appears to show how a sinful man can be just with God. The wisdom of the world fails here; it cannot open up a way for a sinner to find access unto a holy God. There is no promise they can see that any to-morrow will ever rise upon this fearful night.

Then comes sleep, a broken, restless sleep. "And he lay down in that place to sleep, and he dreamed." Here is the time, and this the place when and where the Lord found Jacob, and where he finds all his people; when they have given up hope in themselves. "In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed, then God openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction."—Job xxxiii. 15.

"And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it." In this dream the way of access unto the Father is presented in a glorious figure. It is in a vision, in a figure, in a dream, that Jesus and his salvation are made known to men. It is by revelation always, and not by searching, that he is found out. The revelation is first given to Jesus, the man of God's right hand.

"The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave to him, to show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass."—Rev. i. 1. "Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty." I have exalted one chosen out of the people. (Psalms lxxxix. 19.)

Those to whom this revelation is to be made are first prepared to feel their need of it, to feel their need of that help which is laid upon Jesus, by experiencing their utter lack of power in themselves to deliver themselves from the condemnation of the law, and to come into the favor of God. Whatever the Lord has in store for any one he will cause that one to desire, to seek for in vain by any power of his own, and to inquire of the Lord for. Jacob asleep, with the stones of that desert land for his pillows, represents all the Lord's people at the time when they have come to the end of their earthly strength, have fully felt the depravity of their hearts, and the righteousness of God's holy law, and are trying in vain to find some rest in the works of that law which is "a ministration of death, written and engraven in stones." Here is the revelation of Jesus Christ in a figure to those who have been brought thus far by the law as a schoolmaster, and have been prepared by that legal teaching for this wonderful revelation.

This ladder is not for Jacob to climb on up to heaven. I have read that not only must we climb up to heaven on that ladder, but that we must ourselves build the ladder for ourselves as we go up. But this ladder seems to be complete. Its top reached to heaven; not to the natural heavens, which show to our sight and imagination myriads of stars infinitely distant from each other, allowing us to think of no point where the top of the ladder could definitely rest, but from the earth to the heaven where God reigns in eternal glory and blessedness; to the high and holy place where the high and lofty One dwells, who dwells also with him that is of a humble and contrite Spirit.

He to whom this ladder is shown is asleep at its foot, and sees it only in vision. It is not for him to climb upon, but for the angels or messengers of God. So our dear Savior said, "Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man."—John i. 51.

While Jacob lies asleep at the foot of the ladder and cannot use it himself, it is for his sake it is there, and its use is for his benefit. The angels of God are ascending upon it with his longings, self-loathings and supplications, and descending with sweet answers of peace and messages of love from the God of salvation to him. It is through Jesus, and through him alone, that any supplication can arise from a poor sinner's heart to the Lord. It is in his name only that any one can find access unto the Father. He is the "new and living way." "No man can come unto the Father," Jesus said, "but by me." And also all messages from the Father to his chosen people are through Jesus. The angels or messengers of God descend upon that ladder to his people at its foot, with his messages to them. It is always through

Jesus that the grace and truth and love and mercy of God come to them. It is through Jesus, and for his sake, that the Father says to them, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee."

"The Lord God stood above the ladder," and gave the blessing of Abraham and of Isaac to Jacob while he was still asleep and dreaming. And he said, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south; and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."

What a wonderful, glorious scene is this, and what glorious and blessed doctrine. The Lord God, who fills heaven and earth, and who inhabits eternity, standing above the ladder, and Jacob, the supplanter, the sinful but sorrowing man asleep at its foot, with stones for his pillows. The ladder itself a wonder of wonders, set up on the earth, and its top reaching to heaven. Jesus upon the earth in the likeness of sinful flesh, with all the sins and afflictions and infirmities and temptations of his people upon him, and yet "holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." "Its top reached to heaven." "I and my Father are one," he said.

This ladder could be seen by Jacob only when asleep, only in vision. When awake he could not see it. The way of salvation could only be seen in vision, in a dream, "in slumberings upon the bed," during all that legal dispensation. It did not openly appear until the gospel day, in the appearing of Jesus Christ in the flesh.

In the terms of the blessing which the Lord God gave to Jacob while thus in a dream, when deep sleep had fallen upon him, what absolute assurance and certaintly are expressed. No contingency, no conditions, are suggested. "I will keep thee in all places whither thou goest." Jacob, after he awoke, in the wonder and excitement of his mind, made a vow and some promises which appeared to be based upon conditions. There was truth expressed in his vow, but he had not yet come to fully know the Lord and his ways. That was to be fully taught him twenty years later, in another and more wonderful manifestation of God to him in another night, during all the dark hours of which he was to wrestle with the angel of God, and at the morning's dawn was to prevail, and to receive the blessing of the angel, and a new name, but with it the loss of his own strength. That was to be a time of rejoicing with Jacob, though he was never to walk again in his own strength, but always to halt upon his thigh. But this was to him a dreadful place, and he was afraid. He awoke that morning with all of his natural strength renewed, and was ready to go on his journey,

but his heart was filled with the terror of the Lord. He now knew that he had seen in the vision of this wonderful night the house of God and the gate of heaven, but instead of giving him peace and comfort, it made him afraid. But somehow he seemed to see a great importance in the stone which he had taken for his pillows, and he set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon it, and said it should be God's house, and that the Lord should be his God, if he would do just what he had already declared to Jacob he would surely do.

And that Stone is the house of God; for all that was written upon it has been fulfilled by the dear Savior, and he is now in the gospel "the Shepherd, the Stone of Israel." Here is Bethel, the house of God, the sure resting-place for all his people. Under the legal dispensation this house of the Lord was seen only in figures and visions. Now under the gospel dispensation that beautiful house is seen by faith wherever two or three are gathered together in Jesus' name, and by faith and love dwell together in him.

SEPTEMBER 5, 1903.

MORE ABOUT JACOB

(Genesis xxxii.)

Although Jacob had seen the ladder in a dream at Bethel, and had heard the voice of the Lord speaking to him from above it, and had vowed a vow unto the Lord after he awaked out of his sleep, yet I do not understand that he at that time knew the Lord as his Savior. He knew him as the God of power, but not as the God of grace. While I think he may be regarded as a typical representation of the Lord's people when the presence of God in the law has made them feel that they are in a dreadful place because their sins are manifested and condemned; yet it is evident from what follows that he had not yet experienced that fear of the Lord which is to hate evil, and which causes one to hunger and thirst after righteousness.

In his contract with Laban, after having served him fourteen years for his two daughters, Jacob still manifests the deceitfulness of his nature which his name implies. He agreed to receive as his wages "the spotted and speckled cattle, and the brown cattle among the sheep, and the speckled and spotted among the goats," after all such as were at present among them had been removed; then by an ingenious device he caused the strongest and best of the increase of the flocks and herds to be spotted and brown, and so caused the wealth of Laban to come to himself. This device he kept from the knowledge of Laban, and evidently also from Rachel and Leah. He was not open and candid, but deceitful still. And even when telling his wives that the Lord had told him to return to the land of his father, he seems to have gone beyond what the Lord had said to him, making it appear to them as though the Lord had spoken to him in a dream about this increase of the ring-streaked, speckled and grisled cattle, as a miracle wrought

especially in Jacob's favor, not alluding to his own part in bringing it about. The time had not yet come for Jacob to experience the power of a new name, when he should no more be called Jacob.

Surely those who have felt that fear of the Lord "which is to hate evil" cannot think that sins committed by the Lord's chosen people are any the less vile than those committed by others. All sin is hateful to the Lord, and wherever his Spirit is, there will be felt the same hatred of sin that he has. A lie is no more excusable in Jacob than in Judas; adultery and murder are as terribly sinful in David as in the vilest man. It seems hardly necessary to state what must be so clearly evident to all quickened souls.

The question will often arise, Why were such holy men of old as Noah, and Abraham, and Jacob, and David, left to show in their conduct such weaknesses and sinfulness as they did, and why were such things as they did put on record? I have no doubt that it was that it might be ever known and remembered that in the flesh all are alike sinful; that "there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God;" that by nature no one is more worthy than another, for all are alike "children of wrath," and that even after one has been quickened by divine life his Adamic nature is still depraved and untrustworthy, and is to him a "bondage of corruption," from which he earnestly desires and expects to be delivered. (Romans viii. 19-21.) David seems to present this thought concerning his great transgression in the fifty-first Psalm, in which he so humbly confesses his sin, and so earnestly supplicates God's mercy: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest."

Surely no one "who knows the plague of his own heart" can think that I am taking an unwarranted liberty with the name of the patriarch Jacob, or of "the sweet psalmist of Israel," when I allude to their sins as something to be abhorred. Surely none can think that in loving them we must love their sins, or even excuse them. They themselves abhorred and loathed them, and themselves because of them, and thus was the grace of God magnified and exalted in them. It was by faith, not by works, that they pleased God; by that faith in them to which Christ was revealed as their righteousness, and by which they saw his day and were glad. We love them not because we see them as better than others by nature, but because we see them as subjects of the glorious grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; and as subjects of that same grace, through that same faith, we, who hate our own lives for their sinfulness, are brought from the ends of the earth to "sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of God." "Through much tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God." Jacob must come in that same lonesome path of affliction and soul trouble through which all the saints have come into the knowledge of God's salvation. "They shall come with weeping, and with supplication will I bring them."—Jer. xxxi.

Now as Jacob approaches the time and place where the Lord will reveal himself unto him as his Savior, we find him in supplication for the first time, and hear him for the first time in his life humbly acknowledge his unworthiness of the least of all the mercies that the Lord has shown to him. At Bethel, where he had seen the ladder, and had heard the Lord's words in a dream, he made a vow, and promised that if the Lord would keep him in the way he was going, and would give him bread to eat and raiment to put on, and bring him back to his father's house in peace, then the Lord should be his God, and that of all the Lord should give him he would give a tenth to him. But not a word about feeling unworthy, and not a prayer for mercy is recorded of him then. But now he has met the angels of God. What these angels, or messengers, were sent to meet him for, we are not told. He said, "This is God's host." I have no doubt they brought some messages to him from the Lord that stirred his soul, and prepared him for what was to follow.

Jacob now remembers his brother Esau, the borders of whose land he is approaching. It is in the land of Seir, the country of Edom. We may have in mind, as we go along here, that Esau, Jacob's twin brother, older than he, may represent the flesh, from which all our greatest troubles and fears and apprehensions arise. Jacob sends into Esau's land to announce his approach, and with messages to win his favor. But the messengers return with the startling word that Esau is coming to meet Jacob, and with him four hundred men. "Then Jacob was greatly afraid and distressed." This is indeed "the time of Jacob's trouble."—Jer. xxx. 7. He now made such arrangements for safety as he could, dividing his people, flocks and herds into two bands; and then he prayed, pleading the Lord's command for him to return, and his promise to deal well with him, acknowledging the Lord's mercies and truth which he had shewed to him, and his unworthiness of the least of them, and then pleading for deliverance from his own brother, "from the hand of Esau; for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea which cannot be numbered for multitude."

Jacob now arranged liberal presents of sheep and cattle and goats in several droves, and sent them on to meet Esau successively. "For he said, I will appease him with the present that goeth before me, and afterward I will see his face; peradventure he will accept of me." There was no quiet or rest for Jacob that night. Fear of Esau and gloomy forebodings of evil seem to have taken possession of his mind. "And he rose up that night, and took his two wives, and his two women servants, and his eleven sons, and passed over the ford Jabbok. And he took them and sent them over the brook, and sent over that he had. And Jacob was left alone."

Each of God's children is alone when the Lord is dealing with him. Even though many people should be around him, yet he is alone with

God. He can have no one with him in this solemn time of intercourse with God. "He led them forth by a *solitary* way." When the Lord has a controversy with his people, and brings them into sorrow for their sins, "they shall mourn apart; every family apart and their wives apart."—Zech. xii. 12. No one can help us mourn; no one can know what passes between our souls and the Lord when this wrestling is going on.

"And there wrestled a man with him till the breaking of the day." This man Jacob spoke of as God: "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved."—Gen. xxxii. 30. Hosea speaks of him as God, and also as "the Angel."—Hosea xii. 3, 4. To me it appears that here is presented the Angel of God's presence in the law, which the Lord said to Moses should go up with him out of the wilderness into Canaan, the promised land. (Exodus xxxiii. 12-15.) We may regard Jacob here as representing all that chosen people, his posterity according to the flesh, with whom the Lord made a covenant in Horeb. (Deut. v. 2.) The Angel of God's presence in the law wrestled with that people during all that legal night and prevailed not. "All the day long [that legal day, which is the night dispensation,] have I stretched out my hands to a rebellious and gainsaying people, who would none of my reproofs." But that wrestling must cease before the coming of the gospel day.

More particularly and fully does Jacob here represent that spiritual people called by his name, of whom the prophet Jeremiah says, "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. Therefore they shall come and sing in the heights of Zion."—Jer. xxxi. 11, 12. This one name Jacob stands for all that people as one nation according to the flesh, until the gospel day dawned, when they ceased to be recognized by that name as the people of God. The children of the flesh were no longer known as his people. While the Lord knew that people, as he knew Jacob at Bethel, and again at the brook, yet they as a fleshly people did not know him in a spiritual sense as the God of salvation, as Jacob did not know the Lord in that sense at Bethel, nor yet at the brook until the blessing of knowledge and of salvation came to him with the new name Israel, and with the breaking of the day.

But all the history of that fleshly nation, with that covenant of works, and that worldly sanctuary, and the carnal ordinances, and the first tabernacle, and the gifts and sacrifices, "which could not make him that did the service perfect," with all the rebellions and punishments of that people, and God's long-suffering shown to them; all this had a figurative meaning, and set forth in types and shadows the truth of salvation as shown in the everlasting covenant made with the spiritual Israel, which was to be manifested in the gospel dispensation. All these legal things belonging to this night dispensation were "figures for the time then present," "patterns of things in the [gospel] heavens," "shadows of good things to come." The wrestling which

only the Lord's spiritual people among that fleshly nation experienced, was also experienced by all of his spiritual people that had lived from Adam to Moses, and has been experienced by all since, and will be experienced by all that shall come after, till the last vessel of mercy shall be gathered. In the case of each child of God there is the natural state of death in sin; then the awakening to the knowledge of that sin and hatred of it, which brings the soul into the darkness of night; then the struggling and wrestling with the angel of God's presence in the law; then the sense of failing strength, inability to walk in the way of holiness; a recognition of the holiness of the law, but a sense of being helpless and undone because unable to attain unto that holiness, being already condemned by it, and a feeling that the law justly condemns us, and that righteousness requires that we shall give up all hope of God's favor. "Let me go, for the day breaketh."

Here is set forth what is in some measure the experience of all the Lord's people. What is true of the whole nation is true of each one composing that nation. What is true of the Head is true of each member of the body. The length of time in each part of the experience is not essential. The night in one case may seem to be for years, while in another case it is but for a moment; but it is night, and is a time of wrestling, a time of fear, and sorrow, and weeping. "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

But now Jacob's thigh is out of joint by the touch of the Angel. All hope of righteousness by the works of the law is gone. It is God's law, and it is holy and just and good. It was a righteous touch, a just stroke, that weakened Jacob's strength in the way. We now acknowledge that God is just, and his law is just. It has shown us what we are, guilty and justly condemned. Jacob never knew that before. But why does he not give up the struggle now and let the Man go? Ah, that cannot be done; that is beyond mortal power to do. Can the thirsty man cease to thirst? Can the hungry man cease to desire food? Can the man who still breathes let go his desire to breathe? Here is a struggle which was begun by the Angel, but is now carried on by Jacob. A new principle has been developed in him. The movement of a divine life is there. In that dark night in his soul, and with the sense of weakness and pain in the very center of earthly strength, there has sprung up a strong, pervading desire for another kind of strength; a longing for a heavenly blessing. Faith in his soul, a principle he knew not before, has taken hold of God's strength, since his own has failed, and now his will is so thoroughly engaged and engrossed in the holy struggle that he cannot let go.

"I will not let thee go except thou bless me." What a wonderful thing is the will. It is the gathering together and the outcome of all that we are at the time. Talk of a man handling his will, changing his will, denying his will! That can only be done by another will in us superior to the first. We may have a will to deny the expression of our will, but that other stronger will must be at hand.

In the case of Jacob we see the work of that God who alone can work in any one "to will and to do of his good pleasure." He now has such spiritual hungerings and thirstings as can never be satisfied from earthly sources. His whole soul goes out after the blessing of the Lord. "I *will* not let thee go except thou bless me." He cannot have a will to let go that hold. He cannot cease to cry for the Lord's favor, any more than a child burning with a fever-thirst can stop crying for water. Though the babe does not know what it wants so as to tell it, the cry tells it.

Why does the man give the breaking of the day as the reason for asking Jacob to let him go? Because the law must be vindicated and magnified before there can be the glory of a new day. Until the law is satisfied the Sun of Righteousness cannot arise. The law can look over into the gospel land, but cannot go over. When it struck the Rock Christ Jesus so that the waters of salvation flowed out its work was done. Moses is buried by the Lord, so that Israel shall see him no more.

When in the wrestling Jacob loses his strength, then the Angel's work through the law is done, the blessing is given to Jacob, and the Angel ascends as the Sun of Righteousness into the heavens of the glorious gospel day.

But before this blessing comes to Jacob there is on his part a full confession of who and what kind of a man he is. Nothing is kept back, nothing hidden from the Lord. "What is thy name? and he said, Jacob," a supplanter, a sinful man. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Whose heart? The heart of some other man? No, the heart of this man. My heart is the vile and wicked heart. I never knew it in this way before, but I know it now, and I confess it. "My name is Jacob." Here is the end of all hope of righteousness through any merit of my own. But my hold is still strong on the Angel; I will not, I cannot, let him go. Day and night my cry is unto him, "Remember me, O Lord, with the favor which thou bearest unto thy people. Oh, visit me with thy salvation."

"And he said, Thy name shall no more be called Jacob, but Israel; for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." This new name expresses something new in the experience of Jacob. There is a new kind of power in him now, the power of faith. It is manifest, as was the power of Christ in Paul, in weakness. The poor Jacobs through all time must first feel their own strength utterly fail before they come into the knowledge of this new kind of power. In this new strength, this power of faith in Jesus, they prevail over the Angel, over the wrestlings of the Angel of God's presence in the law. His power is with God, and also with men, with all the men of God whom he represents in this great struggle and victory. Through Jesus Christ, by faith in him who was to come, he prevails over the law, whose righteousness is now fulfilled in him. He received the blessing through the law. By his faith it was secured.

He asked the Angel to tell him his name, but the only reply was the question why he asked it. "And he blessed him there." And still Jacob is asking after that wonderful name, which no man knoweth but he that receiveth it. The knowledge of that name is in his experience. It is the new name of Jesus named upon him, and the knowledge of Jesus thus felt and known is eternal life. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

The name of Jacob is now Israel, a prince, a prevailer. Henceforth as a poor, depraved sinner he is Jacob, who questions, and complains, and mourns on account of his corruption; but as a manifest child of God he is Israel, enjoying the prevalence of faith, assured of God's favor, and satisfied that God doeth all things well. "Jacob said, All these things are against me." "Israel said, It is enough, Joseph my son is alive. I shall go and see him before I die."

But which ever is speaking at any time, whether complaining Jacob or prevailing Israel, we shall see in this man no more seeking for advantage by deceitful dealing, without a check of conscience; no more lies unconfessed; no more hiding of his ways; no more keeping the fruits of evil doings; but we shall henceforth see in his life and conduct a desire for that which becomes a God-fearing man, candor, openness in dealing, honesty, truthfulness and humble confessions of the evils of his heart.

"And Jacob named that place Peniel, the face of God, for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. And as he passed over Peniel the sun rose upon him, and he halted upon his thigh." Oh, what a sweet and glorious sunrise was there, following such a sad and sorrowful night. The ford which they had passed over in the night was Jabbok, which means "pouring out." There Jacob "poured out his soul before the Lord." It was at such a place that Jesus "poured out his soul unto death." There he was "poured out like water," and there all poor, troubled souls in their distress "pour out their complaints before the Lord."

But now Jacob has seen God face to face, has been given a new name, has received the blessing of the God of salvation, and sees the breaking of a new and everlasting day. It is no more Jabbok, but Peniel, that he passes over, for the face of God is shining with the expression of infinite love upon his soul. No fear of Esau now. "Perfect love casteth out fear." "The sun rose upon him as he passed over, and his shrunken sinew and thigh out of joint cannot hinder his progress in the journey now before him, for natural strength is not needed here. Who would not gladly lose all his own strength so that the power of Christ might rest upon him, and the Sun of Righteousness arise upon him with healing in his wings?

DECEMBER 16, 1903.

FRAGMENTS

Is it repetition you are trying to avoid? You do not want to preach the same thing over and over again? You want to have something new every time you speak or write or talk with the dear saints, do you? Some new field of thought and feeling to explore? You would like to have a constant variety, and to be known as a man of varied and unfailing mental and spiritual resources, and not have to go over the same ground time after time.

Well, this is all natural ambition; all fleshly pride and vanity. Having gone down to the garden once to see the fruits of the valley, and to see whether the vine flourishes and the pomegranates budded, does that suffice you, that you must walk in some other direction the next day? Do you not want to go into the same garden again and again? Do you not again and again want to smell the same sweet perfume of the same roses, and taste the same fruits? Yesterday's walk and yesterday's enjoyment of fruit and flower will not satisfy you to-day. The mornings are ever alike, but it is not yesterday morning but this morning that we are enjoying now. It is not a repetition but a new morning.

We are thinking, speaking, preaching upon the same subject of salvation by grace to-day that our minds were occupied with yesterday, but we do not repeat the words of yesterday. We express to-day the thoughts and feelings of to-day in the words of to-day. We go over the same ground, but it is new to us to-day. We breathe the sweet atmosphere to-day that we breathed yesterday, but it is not a repetition of yesterday's breathing; it is the life and breathing of to-day.

It is in this sense that the things of Jesus are always new, while at the same time they are old; "things new and old." When the preacher is alive to spiritual things, he may have the same subject he spoke of exhaustingly yesterday, and yet to the hearer who is hungry for the word he will bring forth out of that subject things blessedly new and fresh. If the subject of yesterday, even the same text of Scripture, is brought to his mind with power, he will not appear either to himself or his spiritual hearers as repeating the thoughts or words of yesterday's sermon.

It is a vain, carnal mind that moves a minister of the gospel to seek after a variety in preaching, and to try to study out some new gospel theme, and new forms of illustration. When the heart is full of the heavenly subject there will come suitable words and suitable illustrations, and the heart of the speaker will be turned to the heart of the hearer, and will be opened to his understanding and comfort. But it will not be to the praise and glory of the preacher, but to the praise and glory of God. It must and shall be known by both preacher and hearer that "we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of men."

How greatly tried I have been because of my limited understanding of scriptural things, and because I fail to find new fields of thought,

but must go over and over the same old ground. But whenever I am given a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and my heart is warmed with his love and filled with praise for his grace and mercy, then I am not seeking for some new line of thought, but all the blessed fullness of the gospel is in the words nearest at hand. The simplest words, with which I have always been familiar, will open up in such new and wonderful ways as fill my soul with admiration and astonishment. A few words of Scripture, at such a time, will come to my mind in such a way as to show fountains of living water springing up into everlasting life; gardens of nuts and fruits and flowers; "fountains of gardens;" mountains of holiness; all the power and riches and beauty of the gospel. We might as well seek variety in the sunshine, or in the starlit sky at night, as to seek variety in the gospel. It is in itself infinite variety, having in itself all that is necessary to supply every kind of need among all the family of God.

Sometimes one is tried because he cannot see in his mind any capacity for variety in prayer. That is when he is thinking of his prayer as a piece of work, and wants it to be such as shall do him credit. When he feels his great need; when he is at the end of the earth and his heart is overwhelmed; when he sees himself as nothing but a poor, blind, vile, wretched sinner, deserving only God's wrath; then he does not seek variety of thought or expression in prayer. At such a time the prayer of the poor publican has variety enough to answer his requirements: "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." Then David's prayer answers his need: "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." But at such a time if these words, or others like them, had not been furnished him, he could only pray "with groanings which cannot be uttered." Why call it repetition when we say the same words in prayer? Do we not need the same mercies every morning and every evening? And is it not because of this same need constantly that the Lord's mercies are "new every morning," and fresh every evening? We may have the same words fixed in our minds as a form of prayer, and many a time it may seem to us that our prayer is but a form. But when our needs are freshly felt, and our desires are strong and urgent for the mercy and grace of God, then the words are filled with the throbbing power of life, and our prayer is not a mere form, but is a present cry unto the Lord.

"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable."—1 Cor. xv. 19.

This is because those to whom, and concerning whom, the apostle is speaking, have a sorrow and grief on account of the felt sinfulness and vileness of their nature, which no other men have. They alone of all men have been given that life in Jesus which is "the light of men," and that light has made manifest to them the depravity of their hearts. (John i.; Eph. v. 13.) This causes them to have continual mourning, and makes them miserable. In due time their mourning is turned into

joy by the revelation to them of Jesus as having redeemed them from sin by being made sin for them, and dying under the sentence of the law against them, "that they might be made the righteousness of God in him." But this righteousness is seen and felt only by faith, and is only a hope. "We wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." They are grieved to find that their natures are still vile. They still have to mourn because of "a vain, deceitful heart, and wretched, wandering mind." They are miserable often because they cannot do the things that they would; because "when they would do good evil is present with them." They are made, however, to rejoice in hope of the glory of God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Their hope is that he "will deliver them from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." This hope is through the resurrection of Christ, and will be fulfilled in their own resurrection. In this hope is their salvation and their present joy. They "are saved by hope. But hope that is seen is not hope. For what a man seeth why doth he yet hope for? But now if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."

If true religion consisted in a change of nature, so that Christians felt no more sin and vileness in their hearts, then they would not be hoping for that, because they would already see it. Some professed Christians do assert that such a change has taken place in them, by their own efforts, and that they do not sin any more. But the Lord's people are not left to be deceived in that way. They are made to "feel the plague of their own hearts," and are miserable when they do feel it. Their hope in Christ is the greatest blessing they have in this life, for it points them to the time when Jesus "shall appear without sin unto salvation." They are helped and comforted by that blessed hope from day to day in this life, but it is not in being given to feel themselves freed from corruption now, and made to be pure, as they long to be, but in being shown more and more how Christ "is of God made unto them wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption"; since they have all the temporal causes for trouble and sorrow that men of the world have, and beside these, the deep sorrow on account of indwelling sin which men of the world do not have. Surely if their hope in Christ were only that they should become better by nature in the flesh in this mortal life, then indeed would they be more miserable than any other men, for such a change will not take place until the resurrection. It will not be experienced while we are in the flesh. It is not in our own life, however blameless it may be, but in the life of the risen Jesus that we by faith "stand holy and unblamable before God in love." The life that we now live before God we live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us, and gave himself for us. And our hope is that "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, we shall appear with him in glory." The apostle John says that when he appears we shall be like him.

Compare the power of our sun with that of Sirius, the "dog-star," which is a thousand times greater. Other suns in the heavens are probably a thousand times greater and more powerful still than Sirius. If this earth were as near to that star as it is to our sun it would be destroyed by his heat in a moment.

The Sun of Righteousness is infinitely more powerful than all of the suns in the universe together. There is no obstacle that can keep his heat away from any part of the new earth, from any one of his afflicted and poor people. "His going forth is from the end of the heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." His people in the gospel dispensation are called the new earth, and he shines upon them out of the heaven of God's laws and ordinances and precious promises and infinite blessings. Whatever comes between them and his blessed beams will be consumed in a moment, for to all his enemies, and to all the works of men, and to all sin and iniquity, he is a consuming fire. But the same beams are a soft, beautiful light, and a gentle, penetrating and healing warmth to all the poor, helpless souls who love his name, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and who trust alone in him. To their unrighteousness he is merciful, and their sins and their iniquities his blessed radiance does not discover, but hides them even from his own sight. He does not remember them any more. The light of the Sun of Righteousness is the clothing of his people, and his heat keeps them in life.

There are some stars so far distant from this earth that astronomers say it takes their light thousands of years to reach us, even though it comes at the incredible speed of ten million miles a minute. Although such stars are probably suns thousands of times brighter and hotter than ours, yet the great distance prevents any of that terrible heat from being felt by us, and allows us to see but little of the light. But the sinner is farther from God than this earth from the farthest star. Distance in space, though that cannot be comprehended by our finite minds, cannot measure the distance from sin to holiness, from death to life, from earth to heaven. But even that awful distance cannot swallow up the heat and light of the Sun of Righteousness, to prevent their reaching the sinner in the lowest parts of the earth, nor even diminish in the faintest degree their glorious power. "His glory covers the heavens, and the earth is full of his praise."

Through what trouble and sorrow we have to learn the truth of Scripture. This has been a dark and gloomy day to me, though the sun is shining from a clear sky, and brightness is upon the face of the earth. All the morning I have been oppressed and grieved beyond expression by a sense of the utter lack of value in myself or in anything I have done. I have felt my life to be a failure, of no real account to myself or any other, and the feeling is one of desolation and unspeakable sorrow. It seemed terrible to look back and see my life a long stretch of nothingness.

But just now the words came to my mind, "Verily every man at his best state is altogether vanity," and there came into my soul through this expression of the psalmist a kind of relief and comfort. I thought this way: Why should I be so wretched because I am feeling in regard to myself what is declared to be true of every man, even in his best state? Why should I not the rather be glad because the Lord has made me to know this truth, instead of leaving me in ignorance concerning it till the end of my mortal life? Only the living can know it. Is not this an evidence of a new and heavenly birth? It is this divine life which has caused me to feel my nothingness, and to know the vanity of all fleshly ambition and power and glory. Why should the truth felt in myself fill me with such disappointment and gloom? Have I not been trying to look from a worldly standpoint, and to build upon a worldly foundation? Have I not been expecting a value and a revenue of pleasure from that which has no value, and which can yield no true and lasting joy? Have I not been regarding all flesh as better than the grass, and the glory of man as more valuable and lasting than the flower of grass? It is sad to feel to be "less than nothing and vanity," but the experience of that truth is necessary in order that I may come into the experience of true and lasting good. "Through great tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of God."

Gifts

The Scriptures of the New Testament present the gospel church in her perfection, as the workmanship of God. Her doctrine and order are plainly shown there to all of her children, as they are also revealed to each in his experience, so that the word and the experience witness together to all that is of God. We are to look only to the inspired Scriptures of truth to decide concerning any point of doctrine, or any ordinance, or any gift to the church of God; and there alone shall we find the proper order of those things of God, as arranged and established by his authority.

Whatever assumes to belong to the church is to be tried by the pattern shown to us in the Scriptures of the New Testament, and if not found there it must be discarded by every lover of the truth. The gifts of Jesus to the church are named by the inspired apostle in his letter to the Ephesians: "And he gave some apostles, and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers." The object of these gifts is also there stated: "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Any professed gift that is not included in this catalogue and description, must not be recognized as of God; and any one who claims to have work to do as a gift of God to the church in behalf of any but the saints, or in order that any may become saints through his work, is clearly not manifesting the character of a gospel gift, for all of these gifts are declared to be exclusively for the benefit of the body

of Christ, to which they themselves belong as "joints and bands" which minister nourishment to the body. (Eph. iv. 11-16; Col. ii. 10.)

November 12, 1903.

GOD NO RESPECTER OF PERSONS

(Acts x. 34.)

All men naturally think that God is a respecter of persons. No man can think otherwise except by special revelation. It is impossible for our natural minds to conceive of any reason why the Lord should regard any man with favor except as seeing something in his person that causes him to merit that favor. All natural religion is based upon the belief that God is a respecter of persons. If a man would recommend himself to any king or potentate, he must show something in his person, relationship or work deserving his regard. So it is supposed that by some merit of his own, either as the son of a good man, or as having intrinsic or acquired merit in himself, a man must be recommended to the Lord.

Peter thought that God was a respecter of persons even when he preached on the day of Pentecost. Although those who gladly received his word represented all nations, yet they were all Jews or proselytes, and it was his thought that the Lord regarded the person of a Jew or a proselyte above the person of a Gentile, and he was not taught the truth on this point until he was at the house of Cornelius. When he heard the experience of that Gentile, to whom Jesus was yet unknown, and saw that God had visited him and his house with his salvation, then he could say, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him."

At this time he understood the meaning of the vision that came to him on the housetop a few days before. While in a trance "he saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. And Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven."

What a wonderful vision! Out of heaven came beasts and birds and creeping things of all kinds; wolves and lambs; doves and ravens; the lion as well as the ox; the cow and the bear, and even the loathsome worm; but they were all in the great sheet, which was so knit at the four corners that none of them could get out; and all this strange and various crowd of living creatures was received up into heaven again. What could it mean? It must have been the subject of wondering thought in Peter's mind all the way down to Cæsarea. But all at

once, while hearing Cornelius relate his vision, the deep, glorious meaning of this vision came to Peter; he now understood that all that was in the sheet represented people; for "he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation: but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean."

Here, then, is that which represents the everlasting covenant of grace. The sheet was let down three times, to show that salvation is the same in each of the three dispensations. All the animals in the sheet were clean, the wolf as well as the Lamb, the worm as well as the dove. The voice declared to Peter that they were all clean, for God had cleansed them. To Peter the wolf and the raven appeared as unclean as they ever had been, but God's voice declared that God had cleansed them. This was true only of those in the sheet. Out of the sheet they were unclean, but seen in the sheet they were declared by the Lord to have been cleansed.

In their own persons, in the flesh, the Lord's people are sinful and depraved, and they feel it when the life of Jesus is their light. So Job said, "I am vile; I abhor myself." Isaiah said, "I am a man of unclean lips." Daniel said, "When thou spakest unto thy servant my comeliness was turned in me into corruption." Paul said, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) there dwelleth no good thing." What a blessed thing that God is no respecter of persons, for if he were, no man could stand before him. But it is in the sheet that the creatures of all kinds are regarded as clean. It is in the everlasting covenant, it is in the person of Christ, that poor sinners are respected. He "is given for a covenant of the people," and in him we stand holy and unblamable before God in love. He respects his people not in their own persons, but in the person of Christ.

One has been looking over the whole field of his nature, and it is all a desert. He sees in himself no good, but all evil. When he would do good, evil is present with him. He cries out, "I am a worm and no man." Then the Lord gives him a glimpse of the everlasting covenant; lets him look for a moment into the sheet that was let down from heaven in the sight of Peter, and behold, there is a crawling worm, and he hears a voice from heaven saying, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the holy One of Israel." What a glad surprise to the poor soul when this revelation of Jesus as his righteousness and salvation breaks in upon his soul, and he is made to rejoice in believing that he is accepted with him.

Truly the coming of Jesus in his power, as the one who ruleth over men in justice and in the fear of God, "is as the light of the morning when the sun ariseth; even a morning without clouds: as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain." How glad Peter was to proclaim that in every nation the fear of the Lord in the heart, which is to hate evil, and the working of righteousness,

are sure evidences that such are accepted with God; accepted with Jesus. The fear of the Lord is put into the heart by our God, who says, "I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me." The working of righteousness is the effect of the work of grace in the heart. He who lies helpless on the bed is as capable of working righteousness as one who is well and strong. It is in the heart; it is heart-work. "As a man thinketh so is he." It is the tree of righteousness planted by the Lord which bears the fruit of righteousness. "The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." Only by faith in Jesus can any righteous work be done. So Peter was glad to know and to proclaim that wherever there was one in any nation who had the fear of God in his heart, and that faith by which one is enabled to walk in the good works of Jesus, that one is thus manifested as accepted with Jesus, the only wise God and our Savior.

We do not read, "*shall be* accepted *by* him," but "*is* accepted *with* him." All of the Lord's people were in Jesus in a legal and mystical sense when he died, and they were "raised up together with him," and they were accepted with him in the acceptable day of the Lord, when the gates lifted up their heads that the King of glory might come in. The beasts and birds and creeping things were in the sheet when it came down from the open heaven, to show that the righteousness and salvation of all the Lord's people are from heaven. The sinner does not come down from heaven, but his righteousness does. As a saved sinner he is God's "workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that he should walk in them." He did not put himself into the great sheet, into the covenant of grace, nor can he get out of it. He did not cleanse himself from sin. The word is, "What God hath cleansed that call not thou common." Poor, troubled soul. You look to yourself like a sinner, black as the raven, wicked as the wolf, vile as the worm, but God hath cleansed you, and now you are waiting for the full manifestation of the blessed work, "The earnest expectation of the creature [the new creature in Christ] waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." And this creature "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

And during this time of waiting and earnest expectation there are seasons of comfort and rejoicing. The dying of the Lord Jesus is borne about in our body, but the life also of Jesus is manifested in our body. The tribulation continues on account of felt depravity in the flesh, but we rejoice in the tribulation because it worketh patience, and experience, and hope which maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." We cannot rejoice in ourselves, but we do at times rejoice in the Lord, for he is rich unto us in mercy, and goodness, and grace, and loving-kindness, and his blessed name has been unto us a strong tower, in which

we have found safety. We cannot but be glad and rejoice in the precious hope that we are represented in that great sheet that was let down from heaven to the earth, and that the Lord remembers us in the "everlasting covenant which is ordered in all things and sure."

NOVEMBER, 1903.

FRAGMENTS

YOU know a certain plant which grows only in some terrible mountain wilderness; you are well acquainted with the fearful region where it is found, having been lost in those indescribable desolations and wandered there for days alone. Some day you meet a man who holds that plant in his hand. "I gathered it," he says in reply to your question. Without another word from him you know in what awful places he has been, and what dangers and troubles he has passed through. He need not tell you of the dizzy heights he has climbed, or of the dark and terrible gorges and dangerous precipices among which he has been. You know them well, and your heart goes out in sympathy to him. So in spiritual things: if one who knows Jesus meets another who shows that he has seen that "Plant of renown," how quickly and easily they know each other's spiritual travels and history. A word, sometimes, even a look, will open to us a view of the trials and struggles of the soul that have extended through months, perhaps, and even years, which it would be impossible fully to tell in words. When we see thus an evidence of an experience of grace in one, and recognize that Christ is in him the hope of glory, we know where he has been in his inner life, wandering in the desert and lost in the waste-howling wilderness of a sinful nature, coming into terrible depths of depravity and finding horrible pits of corruption in the heart. We know where he was when he gathered that Plant of renown, when he first saw the rose of Sharon; we know where he was when he first found Jesus, "or rather, was found of him." He was at the "end of the earth," and his "heart was overwhelmed," and he was crying unto God in his trouble, feeling as helpless as a little babe surrounded in the darkness by roaring and ravenous wild beasts. The wilderness and the solitary place was first a place of fear and anguish before it was made glad for him, and the desert was a place of desolation and weeping before it began to "rejoice and blossom as the rose."

How pleasant it is for those to meet who have traveled the same journeys, and experienced the same desolations and sorrows, and have come into the same deliverance through the sufferings of him who was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." How easy it is for such people to become acquainted with each other.

YOU ask me to explain 1 Cor. xi. 29: "For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." The Lord's body there referred to is the church, which is called in several places the body of Christ. His body

of flesh represented in a sense the church. He is the life of the church, and it is said, "Ye are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones." Again in 1 Cor. x. 17, "For we, being many, are one bread and one body; for we are all partakers of that one bread." When the church comes together to engage in the communion service they thus say that they are as one in Christ, and that they love one another, and in that ordinance they show forth the Lord's death, and as they take that bread and wine they do it in remembrance of Jesus. Now if any one should engage in that solemn service to gratify his appetite, or with hatred in his heart toward one of the brethren, he would be eating and drinking unworthily, and he would thus manifest that he was not at the time in unity with the body, and would thus eat and drink damnation to himself. The word damnation means condemnation. He himself would be condemned as the unworthy one instead of the one whom he hates. One who feels himself unworthy to partake of this ordinance cannot at such a time eat and drink unworthily. He feels to be less than all others, and esteems them as better than he. That sense of unworthiness is one of the best evidences that he truly belongs to the body as one of its living members, and that the life of Jesus is moving him. He loves the brethren, and this is the great evidence that one has passed from death unto life.

If I am in the everlasting arms at all I am like a child in its mother's arms. It is constantly reaching out after something it does not need, and which it must not have. It spends a good deal of its time in trying to get away and creep off by itself, and yet it knows and feels that safety and true comfort are to be found only in the restraint of those arms, and that when rest is taken it must be there.

How I have struggled at times to obtain some fancied good, and have known afterward that it was the everlasting arms of grace and love which held me back. If ever I have known true thankfulness to God, it has been for the hindrances that caused such disappointments. It seems easier to be thankful for the pleasant attainment of right things desired than for bitter disappointments; easier to thank God for a bright and lovely day than for a dark and stormy night, but it seems that a deeper experience and a broader, higher knowledge causes the latter, and a more solemn feeling attends it, if there is any difference. The apostle says, "In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."

We do not know what is best for us, but the Lord does, and as he "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," it is blessed to "know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose." The three Hebrew children had great reason to be thankful for the wrath of the king and the fiery furnace, and Daniel for the night in the lion's den.

NOTHING that grows out of earthly soil can satisfy a hunger for righteousness; a thirst after righteousness cannot be quenched at any worldly spring. If a man owes one debt he cannot discharge or lessen it by refraining from contracting another debt. A man who has committed one crime cannot plead in defense of that any number of crimes that he has not committed. The conscience upon which there is the guilt of one sin cannot be cleansed in any degree by freedom from the guilt of a thousand other sins. If the man could live ever after without committing one transgression, still he could never be righteous; he must suffer the penalty of the law for that transgression. Therefore, because man is a sinner, righteousness cannot be his through any work of his own. The only good work he can do is to suffer the penalty of the law. But then he is dead. So another must obey that law unto death, and one so related to the sinner that he is responsible, as the Shepherd for the sheep's trespass, as the husband for the wife's debt, as the Head for the body's sin. One also who can not only lay down his life for the sheep, but take it up again. So Jesus lived a perfect life under the law, and died for his people's sins, and is risen again, and so has fulfilled all righteousness. He is our Righteousness; our hunger and thirst for righteousness are satisfied in him; we eat of that Bread and drink of that Fountain. This is that "righteousness which is of God by faith in Jesus Christ."

THOSE who are born again know that the unlawful indulgence of their appetites and lusts is sinful. While they see in themselves the same sinful nature they had before they received a hope, they abhor themselves for it, and do not feel that they can excuse themselves for any indulgence on the ground that it is in their nature, and that they cannot restrain themselves. There will be a check of conscience, and punishment will follow transgression. Paul says, "But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest having preached to others I myself should be a castaway." Castaway from the fellowship of the church, from usefulness to the brethren, and from the comforts and blessings of the gospel.

THE apostle says, "Hereby we perceive the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren."—1 John iii. 16. And you ask, "Have I ever laid down my life for the brethren? In looking back I cannot recall any single instance of having done so." Yet I know that there is in your experience, and I hope in mine, that principle to which the apostle refers. No one but Jesus ever has laid down his life, or ever can, as he did to redeem any from the curse of the law and from eternal death. But has there ever been in our experience a sacrifice of any comfort or hoped-for benefit of a temporal nature for the benefit of another. Have we ever felt willing, and even glad, to lay down some present personal good and valuable thing belonging to this life, that we might

be of advantage and help to some brother or sister? Have we felt glad to visit some one who is in affliction, and to mitigate that affliction by the gift, *not of something we do not need ourselves*, but of that which cost us much, and which is very dear to us? And if some child of God is in the depths of trouble, and we are favored with an opportunity to visit and help him in his affliction, do we limit ourselves and say, "I will go so far; I will give so much to relieve the suffering, but no more; I cannot be expected to do more?" No; you would do to the extent of your ability, my sister or brother, to bring up the poor soul out of the depths; that would be your desire. I think that is what the apostle meant when he said, "We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." That is the principle which belongs to the Spirit of Christ. "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." That Spirit is the same in us as in him; it always seeks the glory of God and the good of his children; it leads us to be followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, and teaches us to love one another. In ourselves we see only evil and selfishness, which causes us to mourn, but that would not be the case if we had not the Spirit of Christ. The apostle says, "All that is reproved is manifested by the light." This light is the life which was in the Word, and which is the light of men. (John i. 4.) The apostle tells in the next verse what he means by our laying down our lives for the brethren, for he says, "But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?"

The Lord's day. This expression occurs only once in the Bible, Rev. i. 10. Why should we think this refers to Sunday, or any other particular day of the week? I see no reason. One day of the week is no more the Lord's day than another; he made one as well as another. Under the law the Sabbath was called especially the Lord's Sabbath, a day of rest for his people. That was the seventh day of the week, and only that; it was, like all other holy days, new moons and other ordinances of that legal dispensation, a figure or "shadow of good things to come." The Sabbath, then, means rest, and points, as a type or pattern, to the rest that Jesus secured for his people by finishing all the work demanded by the law, and into which they who believe enter. (Heb. iv. 3, 10.) The psalmist says, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it." This is Jesus, as the preceding verses show. (Psalms cxviii. 19-24.) He is the light of his people. As the natural sun makes the natural day, so the Sun of Righteousness, arising upon his people with healing in his wings, makes their spiritual day. This day which the Lord hath made may well be called the Lord's day. In that day we rest from the works of the law; we rest in Jesus. It seems to me that this was the sense in which John was in the Spirit on the day of the Lord Jesus, when he

heard and saw the glorious things of the gospel. It is only in the light of Jesus, our spiritual day, and only when we are in the Spirit, that these glorious spiritual things can be seen.

There is nothing, so far as I can see, in the New Testament to indicate that the Sabbath was ever any other day than the seventh, nor that the Sabbath was continued as an ordinance after the legal dispensation was ended. The apostle Paul declares that the Sabbath is not to be observed in the gospel church. (Col. ii. 16, 17.) But he does tell us that we are to be careful and loving toward each other when there is a difference between us in regard to our understanding of this subject, and not to judge one another. One man esteemeth one day above another; another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. It is to the Lord that one regardeth the day and the other regardeth it not. We are to be kind and charitable toward each other, and not try to have dominion over one another's conscience, while we try to present our own understanding of the subject, and walk according to the light given to us.

April 29, 1904.

SOWING TO THE FLESH, AND SOWING TO THE SPIRIT

(Gal. vi. 7, 8.)

Sowing to the flesh is seeking the gratification of our natural or fleshly desires in what we do, whether these desires pertain to the mere animal propensities of our nature, or to the more exalted qualities of the mind and heart. When we sow wheat we are looking forward to what we shall receive as the result and reward of that work. So when we do something with a view to our own advantage in a worldly sense, we are said to be sowing to the flesh.

The apostle uses this figure of sowing and reaping with reference only to the manifested people of God. He is talking only to and of those who have been made alive spiritually; those who have been born both of the flesh and of the Spirit, and so are partakers of both natures. A natural man is not spoken of as one who may sow either to the flesh or the Spirit, for all he does or can do is from a fleshly motive. He is dead spiritually, not having spiritual life, and his works of a religious nature are only "dead works." He cannot sow to the Spirit, and the apostle speaks of living souls, and not of those who are dead, as sowing to the flesh.

Those who can and do sow to the flesh are those who also can experience a sowing to the Spirit. For this is all an experience, through which we are brought to know the wonderful workmanship of God. Those who can sow to the flesh must be those who know the fruit of that sowing to be corruption. The natural man does not know these worldly things as corrupt, but as the highest kind of good for him. It is only those upon whom the Spirit of the Lord has blown who know and realize that all flesh withers like the grass, and all the glory

of man fades as the flower of grass, (Isaiah xl. 7,) only a living soul who knows the goodness of spiritual things, can reap corruption from fleshly works.

To seek the honor and glory of God in what we do is to sow to the Spirit. This the natural man cannot do, for he knoweth not the things of the Spirit, and this the spiritual man can only do by the grace of God, and by the power of the Spirit working in him mightily. It is as impossible for a natural man to reap corruption in his experience as it is for him to sow to the Spirit and reap life everlasting. What a wonderful work that is which must be wrought in a poor sinner's heart before he can say truthfully, "Behold, I am vile," "I abhor myself." What a divine and holy principle that must be which causes one to see that in him, that is, in his flesh, there dwells no good thing, and that in his best state he is altogether vanity. This is the man who hears with solemn concern, and who well knows that God is not mocked. There can be no turning aside by any of his people from the way of holiness, and from the truth of God's salvation, without an experience of pain. The chastisement will surely be felt for every transgression. It is as sure under the gospel as it was under the law of Moses, but in a different way. The living member of the natural body will feel pain if it touches the fire. So a living member of the body of Christ cannot feel a movement of sin without pain. A conscience made tender in the fear of the Lord is sure to suffer from the touch of sin. Such a conscience is an unspeakable blessing.

This is the cause of so much suffering on the part of the Lord's children. A sinful nature, a carnal mind, a deceitful heart, what a constant source and cause of sorrow these are. How they make the poor soul cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But the answer will come from time to time with soothing power: "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord." There is, through the Spirit, a constant desire on the part of the new creature to be delivered from the bondage of corruption. (Romans viii. 21.) It is only a living soul that feels this nature of ours to be a "bondage of corruption."

If one can sow to the flesh without reaping corruption, what evidence is there of divine life in him? If one can enjoy and be satisfied with the vanities and frivolities of this world; if one can indulge the vain "desires of the flesh and the mind" with no check of conscience; if one can seek his own advantage in what he does, even in religious work, with no thought for others; if one can walk in evil ways and seek to cover his work from human eyes, but feels no grief for it in the sight of God; in a word, if one, while professing to be a follower of Jesus, is at rest and satisfied with the sinful and flesh-pleasing things of the world, reaping no corruption in a sad and sorrowful heart, that man is not alive unto God, but is dead in sin while falsely professing to be a Christian.

I well know the power of temptation upon a vile heart, and the weakness of the flesh, and I know that a child of God may go far astray, not only in thought and word, but also in deed; and I know how often the child of God is at the ends of the earth, and ready to give up all hope, crying with a last gasp, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." But I know that the evils of our nature must cause sorrow and self-loathing in a quickened soul, and I know that a living soul cannot go astray from the truth with impunity, for "God is not mocked." While a man of God, if left to himself, will surely sow to the flesh, I know that he will as surely reap corruption.

What shall we think of the religious professions of that man who feels at rest and at home in the vanities of the world? Can he be esteemed as a follower of Jesus? What kind of enjoyment of the world did the dear Savior have while here? His "days were spent with grief and his years with sighing." He was "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief" because of our sins which he bore, and for which he died, and all the waves of God's wrath went over him. And what shall we think of one who professes a hope that Jesus suffered untold anguish for his sins in order to deliver him from them, and yet who openly declares himself to be in love with the vanities and gayeties of the world, and determines to seek out and obtain as much of the world as he can? We know that this is just what our vile nature would lead us all to do if we were left to be led by it. But we know that in the case of the people of God, when they turn away from the truth in word or practice, they shall reap corruption to such an extent as is necessary to sicken them of the world, and cause them to "look again toward God's holy temple."

How many poor souls are writing bitter things against themselves, and ready to give up all hope, because they see only evil in themselves, and feel that because of that evil they are justly cut off from the enjoyment of the world, having no comfort in this life, and, they fear, no good hope of a life to come, when this very condition is one of the clearest evidences that they, even now, have everlasting life, and are following Jesus. They are following in the path of sorrow which he trod, and are coming daily into the fellowship of his sufferings. They are not seeking the good things of this world, though they often fear that it is a just judgment of God upon them that they cannot be satisfied with these worldly good things even when they have them. But the world cannot satisfy the hungerings and thirstings of living souls. They want the favor of God and the love of Jesus, and his love felt in our poor hearts is the best evidence that his love and favor are ours.

Many times I have been asked, "Do you think it is wrong to dance?" A dear child who is, I believe, a child of God, writes me: "Do you think it wrong for young people to dance? Of course if one's heart is on nobler and better things he will not care to dance, at least that is the way I feel. I really do not care much for it, because nothing seems

to be gained from having done it." This dear young girl answers her own question. I could not say there is a sin in the act of dancing. If any one really wants to dance I would raise no objection, if the society is good. But if that one is a professed Christian I might ask a few questions. Will one who is really in the path of sorrow that Jesus trod feel like joining in the dance of those who make merry? When one is weighed down with a feeling of the sinfulness of his heart, will he feel like dancing with worldly minded people? When the sweet sense of forgiving love fills his soul with a solemn joy and peace, will he seek the vain society of the world, and feel at home with them in the dance? But though we may not feel a wish to join in the vain and trifling amusements of the world, and though we may have been graciously kept in a great measure from temptations to do things that are evil, yet we wonder, and at times are dismayed to find ourselves reproved by the words, "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not." We often feel that we have not even one thought that is not sinfully selfish. Oh, how abundantly we are forced to reap corruption as we look over our life from time to time. But as we thus reap to our sorrow we are crying in our spirits unto God; we are seeking his face sorrowing; we are looking longingly upon Zion; we are longing for the company of the saints; we are asking of the dear Redeemer where he feeds, and where he causes his flock to rest at noon; we are confessing before him all our sins and sinfulness, and breathing out our prayers for his mercy, and that we might feel again the joys of his salvation, and above all, that he would crucify our flesh, and enable us to do what we do with an eye single to his glory. We little thought that in all this experience we were sowing to the Spirit. But right here we find ourselves reaping life everlasting; reaping the fruit of the Spirit; reaping love and joy and peace and long-suffering, and all the rich cluster of the fruit of the Spirit; filling our bosoms with the precious sheaves as we reap and bind them, and tasting with inexpressible comfort the sweet and healthful fruit.

We had not thought we were sowing to the Spirit; we had tried so often to do so, but could do nothing good, nothing deserving God's favor; we could only weep and cry. But here was the sowing. We must sow in tears. It was Christ in us that brought us into this experience. It is he that works in us, and we do not know it until we reap. We cannot see him coming in his work, but we see the result. We cannot see the face of God as he comes in his salvation to show us his glory, but we see his hinder parts, and behold the glory of the rainbow after the storm has gone by.

We sow in the Fall. The day of sowing may be dark and stormy, and then comes the winter before the harvest. But the changes come quickly in spiritual things. The winter seems long, but it may be but as a moment. We do not wait four months for the harvest; it is at hand. While we are yet looking for long days of winter, suddenly, to our surprise and joy, our Beloved tells us that the winter is past, the

rain is over and gone, and we wonder and rejoice to find the spring in our heart, and to see the flowers on the earth, and hear the singing of birds and the voice of the turtle dove. We do not know that spring has come till Jesus tells us. Then we know that we were sowing to the Spirit in that sorrowful time, sowing in tears, as Jesus did when he went forth under the law, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and we are coming again with him in his finished work in the gospel and in his glory, and we reap with him in joy.

Now we can begin to understand how "if any man love the world the love of the Father is not in him." We felt the love of the world in our fleshly heart, and when we followed after that love we came into a region of death. No love of God was felt while we were thus swallowed up in the world, living after the flesh, but thanks be unto God that we felt the crucifying of the flesh; "crucified with Christ." Then came the winter, the darkness, the coldness, the death; but thank God we were given life to feel the winter, the death. Then we proved that in the Spirit we loved not the world. Then we knew that all our self-seeking, all our selfish longings and efforts, all our fleshly ambitions, all our seeking great things for ourselves in religious work, had resulted only in making us see more and more the corruption of our fleshly nature.

Now the cross is our boast; we cannot glory in any work or merit or power of our own, but only in the cross of Christ, "by whom the world is crucified unto us and we unto the world."

We constantly feel convicted of sowing to the flesh, even in much that we do in regard to the things of the kingdom, of seeking great things for ourselves, and we feel condemned as we reap the corruption that results. We take all the blame to ourselves, even when we see and feel that we have no power in ourselves to overcome that fleshly principle. But when we have sown to the Spirit and are graciously privileged to reap of the blessed fruits, we do not, cannot, take the praise to ourselves, but ascribe it all unto the Lord. By the grace of God alone have we been kept from acting out our vain and selfish propensities, and enabled to have an eye single to the glory of God in what we do. We realize that there is selfishness and sinfulness in our acts, except as faith prevails and shows us that Jesus is our life and righteousness, and that only in him can we appear before God.

It is not by a voluntary work of ours that we sow to the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, and work out our own salvation, but it is by the cross of Christ, by being crucified to the world, by having our own will thwarted, and the will of God wrought in us, "who worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure." And so it is only in the cross of Christ that we can glory, and not in any power or goodness of the flesh. The grace of God is all our dependence and all our hope. The Galatian churches had in a measure removed from him who had called them into the grace of Christ, unto another gospel, which was not another, but a perversion of the gospel of Christ. They were sowing to

the flesh in their religious work, seeking to be justified by the law. They "observed days and months and times and years," and other beggarly elements of the legal world, whereunto they were once in bondage, and their fleshly natures desired that bondage again. Having begun in the Spirit, they foolishly thought to be made perfect by the flesh. They were fallen from grace, and were seeking to exalt fleshly pride. It pleases the flesh to think we can do something for ourselves, and sowing to the flesh is a self-pleasing work. It is a pleasant, cheerful morning when we sow to the flesh, and our hopes are bright. But what we sow is corrupt seed, and the soil in which the seeds falls is corrupt, and therefore when the reaping time comes, as it surely will, we shall have only corruption to reap. Reaping does not make the harvest ours, it only puts us in possession of it. In nature we may let the field go unreaped if it does not suit us, but not so in this; the reaping must be done. "Whatsoever a man [of God] soweth, that shall he also reap," and that is a dark day when we reap of the flesh. It was sown on a bright day with self-confidence and boasting; it shall be reaped on a dark and cloudy day with affliction, tears and self-loathing. But when we sow to the Spirit it is in tears on a cloudy and dark day, with affliction of soul and sorrow of heart. The reaping, however, of this spiritual harvest is on a bright day; and with joy and peace and heavenly comfort, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

MAY 28, 1904.

GIFTS IN THE CHURCH

The gifts of our Savior to the church have all been named in the Acts and letters of the apostles, and their order and purpose fully set forth. The apostles, first in order, had peculiar authority, which they made known to the saints on their first coming to them, claiming obedience to their judgments, not because of any superior merit in themselves, but because of their appointment as apostles "by the will of God." They were prepared by the inspiration of the holy Spirit to render infallible judgments, to declare the doctrine of God in the only form of words in which it can ever be expressed by men with absolute accuracy, and to set in order every ordinance of the Lord, and every gift given to the church, and all the forms of worship and service. They have taught, as Jesus commanded them to do, the observance of all things whatsoever he commanded them, so that nothing is lacking in the Scriptures of the New Testament that is necessary to show to every true seeker his place and privilege and duty in the church of God, and to regulate his conduct in the world.

In regard to every other gift, beside that of the apostles, the church is the judge. "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" No one but the apostles can say to the church, "I am sent to you by the Lord,

and on this account it is your duty to receive and obey my words." In regard to all other gifts the judgment is with the church. Not only is the first recognition of the gift by the church, but also the call by which its character and exercise are to be acknowledged. The gift will often be seen by the church while the man in whom it is seen does not as yet know the nature and meaning of his own exercises, and he is often surprised and rebellious when informed of the mind of the church concerning him. Aside from the judgment of the church there is no reliable evidence of a gift.

The church is presented by the apostles as having possession and control of the members and gifts, not they of the church. The authority by which the gift is upheld is in the church, which is there shown, in figure, as a candlestick, upholding the candle. The gift thus recognized and upheld by the fellowship of the church reflects its light upon the body, and rules over the church with all the authority of the Word which has established and defined the gift and its order and province. The rule and authority are in the office and in the word administered, not in the man as having superior qualities. Of this also the church is the judge as to whether the word is rightly administered and the office used well. The church set apart the seven. (Acts vi. 3.) The church, by the command of the Holy Ghost, separated Barnabas and Saul unto the Lord for a certain work unto which he had called them. (Acts xiii. 1, 2.)

To any one who comes to the saints claiming to be sent to them of God they can say, "Tell us your message, and we will judge whether you are sent unto us from the Lord." Even in the peculiar work of the apostles there was a manifestation of their power and authority in the consciences of the saints, by which they were commended unto them as sent to them of the Lord. (2 Cor. i. 2; iv. 2; v. 11.) It is a man's gift, not his intellectual power, personal attractions or exalted position in the world, which makes room for him in the church of God, and "brings him before great men." This is true when one comes to the Lord's people in written communications, as well as when he speaks in their presence. We are to bear in mind, however, that there is no gift presented in the Scriptures whose ministration to the church is by epistolary communication except that of the apostles. There is much value in the written works of experienced men to edify and comfort spiritual readers; but the peculiar authority of a gift of Jesus to the church does not attach to that exercise. At least I find no intimation in the Scriptures that anything which has been written since the last of the apostolic writings has any such authority over the saints as do the inspired writings, and as does the proper exercise of the divinely appointed gifts in the church. For in the orderly meetings of a gospel church, and nowhere else, authoritative gospel work is done. Christ is in the midst of the church, even where two or three are gathered together in his name, and there is his judgment-seat.

The call came from Cornelius to Peter, not from Peter to Cornelius. Neither knew at first the purpose of God, who was directing each, but when Peter, who was an Elder as well as an apostle, had arrived, and each had recounted his experience, then Cornelius announced the authoritative conclusion: "And thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God."

And not only as to the gifts, but as to their proper exercise, the judgment is to be given by the church, not by the one exercising the gift. "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge." —1 Cor. xiv. 29. No man or church can direct as to what message shall be delivered, but they shall judge as to its character and authority after it has been spoken. There is authority in the gift, but its exercise is *in*, and *through*, and *with* the faith of the saints, not *over* their faith.

The judgment of the saints when they judge angels is not the cold conclusion of natural wisdom and knowledge, but the warm experience of the word of truth in the new heart and in the cleansed conscience, coming "in power, in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." It is a sweet and blessed privilege thus to sit in judgment of angels, and of their messages and work, if they are truly the Lord's messengers; for even when the message is one of reproof to the soul it is a sweet token of the remembrance of our faithful and loving God. But when the power is lacking, and there is no commendation of the word spoken to our consciences in the sight of God, it is a dreary and desolate time with the soul of the hearer.

Wherever errors are seen in the doctrine proclaimed by any with whom we stand in church relationship, or in their walk, I regard it as a duty to take such a course with regard to them as is directed by the Savior and his apostles. In the proper performance of this most solemn duty divine authority will be felt, and its effect seen. The conversion of the erring brother is the only right motive for approaching him on the subject of his faults, and the salvation of others from the error is the only valid reason for speaking of his faults publicly, when their public character has made that course necessary. It is only by *causing one to see his error* that he can be converted from it, not by an assumption of authority to declare that an error is held, or has been committed, and only a plain exposition of the error by the Scriptures, not by the decision of councils, will be effectual for good to the brethren.

The communications of a minister of the gospel with regard to spiritual things should and will receive careful consideration from brethren generally, because of his office, in which he is called to devote his life to attendance upon such things. Yet we must remember that what he says, either from the pulpit or the press, can only be commended to the saints by its own intrinsic value. The convincing power

and authority with which it is given him to teach, rebuke and warn, will appear in the words spoken, as they are seen and felt to be according to the oracles of God.

To the above, which I find among my unpublished letters and fragments, I will add a few sentences. It seems to me very important that every member of the church of God should remember and feel his or her own individual place and responsibility as one of the members of Christ. While regarding all the gifts in the church as from the Lord, and esteeming them at their true value, and while humbly obedient to the gospel rule which the pastor has over the church, each member must stand before God in his own experience of Jesus as his life and righteousness. He is not lost, swallowed up, in any gift, but has an individual standing. He cannot take any sentiment or truth merely upon the assertion of another. He must have an experimental knowledge of it for himself, and whatever duty is laid upon his conscience by the Spirit he cannot throw off upon another, but must attend to himself. And in this sense there is neither male nor female, Jew nor Greek, but all are members of the body of Christ, and members one of another, and all one in Christ. When led by the Spirit they all dwell together in unity, each one profiting by the exercise of all the gifts which the Spirit divideth to every man severally as he will, because by the same Spirit each member of the body is taught the same things which are embraced in the ministry of the various gifts. While regarding very highly every gift, and especially those that have the rule over us, we must each be faithful to our own consciences, and speak only what we can see as the truth. But while we can take no sentiment merely upon the assertion of any man, we must hold fast the form of sound words, which we have heard of the apostles, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. We cannot set up any sentiment of our own contrary to any word of inspiration.

July 6, 1904.

HOW THEY GROW

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow." To his disciples the Savior thus taught precious things concerning his people, how they are manifested, how they are provided for, how they are clothed in beauty and purity by no power of their own, and how their confidence and trust must be alone in the Lord.

The church is called a lily by her heavenly Husband, and is distinguished from all other religious organizations "as the lily among thorns."

The Lord says of Israel that he shall grow as the lily. Therefore we are sure that when we consider how the lilies of the field grow we shall be considering in this beautiful and striking figure that peculiar experience and doctrine of the Lord's people which distinguish them as "a peculiar people."

Growth in vegetable or animal is a great mystery. We cannot fully understand *why* things grow, for it is a part of the unsearchable mystery of life; but we can consider, and in some measure understand, *how* they grow. Growth cannot be regarded as an act, for that would imply that it depended upon an exercise of will. It is not an act of the thing growing, but it is a movement which is a necessary consequent of life. The will of the person or thing growing has nothing to do with the growth. It is an experience. The plant grows because of the life that is in it, not because it wills to grow. If that growth is to be increased it must be by the work of the one attending it in enriching and stirring the soil and giving it water and light and warmth. A man may affect his own natural growth, under certain circumstances, by attention to food and drink, while the principle of life that causes growth remains beyond the possible power of his will or his understanding.

In the figure of the lily in the text, and in similar figures throughout the Scriptures, the subject of God's spiritual work is regarded as a plant or tree, moved and controlled and exercised by the power of the life within, but not exercising in the least degree any power over that life.

When a poor sinner, "who knows the plague of his own heart," considers the lilies of the field, so white, so pure, so beautiful, and then looks into his own heart, so sinful, so full of evil, how can he think of himself as one of those whom the dear Savior would represent by the lily? With what grief and consternation he sees the absolute contrast between the lily in its unspeakable loveliness, and himself. Where can he see in himself any principle or feature which can answer to the purity of the lily? In every respect they seem to him to be "contrary the one to the other." The poor soul cannot realize at such a time that only by the power of the Spirit can he see and feel the evil of the flesh. The natural man does not receive the truth that he is sinful and depraved; that is one of those things which can only be known by the revelation of the Spirit of God. That sad knowledge is an evidence of life, but the Spirit alone can make the poor soul see that evidence. "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."—John i. 4, 5. "All things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light."—Eph. v. 13.

But let us consider how the lilies grow. The first work in order to the growth of a plant is the preparation of the soil. This is the work of the gardener. The first movement made by the seed after it has been put into the soil prepared for it is to send roots downward. The roots will be working and extending into the ground for several days before the plant appears. This order in the work of growing, both in natural plants and in the Lord's plants which grow in the garden of grace, is recognized in the words of the Lord by Isaiah: "And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root

downward, and bear fruit upward."

The soil for plants generally must be broken up and rendered soft and fine, so that the roots can easily work into it. The soil for lilies of some kinds needs much softening by water, and in some kinds to be covered by it. There are a great many things of a most obnoxious kind that need to be gotten together to make a good rich soil for the lily. We speak of the soil as "good," and "rich," but put some of it out of place, on the face or on a white garment, and we pronounce it vile and loathsome.

What a sad, dark, fearful time that is for the poor soul when his thoughts are engaged day and night in searching his own vile heart and finding nothing but evil there. He cannot tell how he first came to see himself so sinful, cannot tell how his thoughts first began to be engaged in such a doleful search, in which he finds no good, but deeper and darker depths of evil.

This broken heart, this depraved and sinful nature, this mass of corruption felt in the soul, is the soil which the Lord has prepared. It is he, the heavenly Husbandman, who has broken up the heart, who has made its corruption appear to our startled view, who has made us sick of sin, and sick of self because of sin.

Into this vile soil our thoughts are working downward, like roots from a good seed which the Lord has planted. This vile nature, this corrupt heart, is the "good ground" into which the good seed has fallen. It is "good ground" because it is well broken up and pulverized and made soft and tender. It is not the corruption, the sinfulness, which makes it good ground, but the knowledge of that corruption and sin, and the hatred of it. All men are corrupt and sinful, but until the law of God enters into the heart no one can know and feel it, and until that knowledge of one's just condemnation comes to him by the quickening power of God his heart is hard like the rock, the wayside or the thorny ground.

When the thoughts are working down in the darkness of our heart, and observing the sinfulness of all our life, trying if they can find some good thing there, what terrible anxiety and distress we feel. We cannot give up the search for something to give us hope, some good thing to relieve our anguish, some way of escape from the sin and evil that everywhere so afflict us. But we can find no relief, no way of escape from evil, for we seem to be all evil. Think of the roots that are working downward and abroad in the depth of the earth; what hopelessness we may imagine is theirs as they work in the darkness, the mass of fine, minute rootlets struggling, pushing themselves down into the soil, which grows more and more mellow, creeping and forcing themselves outward, to find they know not what. But they are doing the work appointed for them, and it is through the work done by them that the tender blade finally appears in sight.

It is through the work done by the thoughts down in the broken soil of the heart that finally the tender hope appears. The thoughts

have been working downward, but the hope is reaching upward. In proportion to the thoroughness of that search downward is the strength and beauty of that blade looking upward. The search must be exhaustive and in vain. Again and again we must learn the sad truth: no light, no hope, no good thing down there in the earth; in the flesh no good thing. That must be learned deeply again and again.

But the tender roots with their mysterious, delicate life-power are taking up something from that dark, obnoxious soil which will be conveyed by the miraculous processes of nature upward and cause the appearance of the blade, the flower and the fruit. So the thoughts have gathered the sad assurance that there is nothing but evil in us, and because there is left no question of that truth, and because we are cut off from all hope in ourselves, we are prepared to wonder and adore when a blessed hope is given unto us reaching upward instead of downward. What a glorious surprise when the hope in Jesus appears to us! What thanksgiving and praise fill our poor hearts!

So the lilies grow, and the corn and the vine. "They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine." "I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon."—Hosea xiv. 5, 7.

When at any time the roots cease to be sent forth downward and outward in the soil, then the plant or the tree will cease to grow. When the thoughts cease to work in the soil of a sinful, broken heart, then the growth in grace ceases. When we lose sight of our sinfulness in any degree, and begin to feel some contentment and satisfaction with our own condition, then we may think that we have attained to some excellent growth. But we have truly not grown at all in a spiritual sense; we have really diminished. "Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."

So from time to time the Lord sends a winter time upon us, when we can only send roots downward; when we can only think of our vileness; when our life looks to us utterly unworthy; when we can hardly see anything in our heart and life in which to take any comfort. The things that we have been enabled to do in obedience to the Lord we are thankful to him for, but we have still to think of our own unprofitableness as servants. All that was of ourselves in every work seems to display our own weakness and sinfulness. We feel a tender thankfulness to the Lord for his goodness in leading us in the paths of righteousness, but we feel also that "the sins of one most righteous day might sink us in despair."

How many a time I have seemed to be at the point of giving up, assured that my hope was not good, because for days I could seem to think of nothing but my own sinfulness and depravity. It was not long ago that while in this dark state of mind, my thoughts active, but active in a downward direction, all at once I saw them as the roots of a plant working downward that the plant might grow upward. What a sweet cōmfort that was.

Think of the pure, white flower of the lily looking downward at the black mud out of which it has grown! Think of the Spirit contrasted with the flesh. In the same person the flesh is felt lusting "against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." No wonder that the Lord's people feel conflicts within themselves. There must be a warfare where there are two contrary principles. None but quickened souls can feel that warfare.

The lilies, how wonderfully beautiful they are. Do they know of their beauty? Do they not feel ashamed as they look down at that black, uncomely soil where they live? Could they grow otherwise or elsewhere than they do? Could they transfer themselves to some whiter, cleaner ground? Can they by exerting some power of their own grow more rapidly, or by neglect can they cease to grow? Can they cause themselves to be more or less pure and fair and lovely? Consider them, how they grow, and then you will see how the Lord's children grow in grace. It is by no effort or power of their own, and yet they are constantly, when exercised by the Spirit, anxious to grow, and feeling that something depends upon them, and are chiding and condemning themselves for their lack of growth. But all their efforts are vain, and only show them how helpless they are, how unable to make themselves any more worthy in the sight of God. Then they come again to the knowledge that all their goodness and power are in Jesus; that he is their righteousness. Then they truly grow, not in themselves, but in Jesus. Then they grow, not in their own works, but in grace. Then it can be said of them:

Blessed are you when you strive in vain,
  And all your works no comfort yield;
For when you cease to toil and spin,
  You are as lilies of the field.
And he who richly clothes the flower,
  Which passes almost as a breath,
Will show his richer grace and power
  In you, O ye of little faith.

The plants in nature grow in the night. I have measured the growth of corn. Once from six at night to six in the morning it grew thirteen inches, and only an inch during the following day. It is authoritatively said that corn will sometimes, under most favorable circumstances, grow sixteen inches in one night. It is in the night time of sorrow and affliction that the Lord's plants grow in the knowledge and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is while under a distressing sense of their own weakness that they grow in the knowledge of Jesus as their Strength. It is through an especially dark and oppressive experience of their own sinfulness and depravity that they grow in the knowledge of Jesus as their Righteousness. When their thoughts have long been working and groping, like the roots of plants, in the dark depths of their earthly nature, and have found no good thing dwelling there, but only evil, then with what glad surprise they

see the same thoughts reaching upward and coming beautifully into flower, and rejoicing in the pure light of the Sun of Righteousness. Then they learn that all their sad and weary night work has not been in vain. Those creeping, searching roots, those struggling, groping thoughts, have brought up into the soul something that was necessary to the real growth of the true plant of grace. Their work down there in the darkness has caused the growth to be away from the earth, away from self-confidence, and has caused the blade to reach upward, and the flower to bloom in the sunlit atmosphere of grace. The poor souls can now see that by the faith and hope and love that are at last blooming in their hearts, and filling them with the beauty and perfume of Jesus' blessed name, they are even more gloriously clothed than are the lilies of the field.

DECEMBER 10, 1904.

"I KNOW YOU NOT"

(Matthew xxv. 12.)

These words were spoken by the Bridegroom to the five foolish virgins in the parable. He and the five wise virgins had gone in together to the marriage, and the door was shut. Afterward the foolish virgins, who had been away buying oil, came to the door, "saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us. But he answered and said, Verily, I say unto you, I know you not."

Different opinions concerning the true application of this parable have been expressed by brethren who do not differ in any degree concerning the truth of salvation, and who in discussing this or any other scriptural subject do not depart from the doctrine of grace. Yet I believe there is a power and comfort in every parable which comes to us only through a right understanding of it.

The view has been entertained by brethren whom I most highly esteem for their clear mindedness in the truth, that the five foolish virgins represent Christians who have been neglectful of gospel duties, and who are punished by being denied admittance for a time into the joys of their Lord. While I believe that every child of God who sows to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, and that those Christians who neglect this great salvation shall not escape the just recompense of reward (Heb. ii. 1-3,) yet there are questions in my mind as to whether this parable is intended to show this distinction between the obedient and disobedient Christian.

The principal thought now in my mind is the language at the head of this article. Is this ever the language of the Bridegroom to any of those who have been manifested as true members of the gospel church, which is his bride? Does Jesus speak thus to his people after he has given them the sweet assurance that he has loved them with an everlasting love? No matter how far astray they may have gone, no matter how disobedient they may have been, when he has given them grace to return in sorrow and true repentance, humbly begging to be

received again into his favor, does he ever say to them, "Verily, I say unto you, I know you not?" Does he not always receive all of his returning prodigals graciously, mercifully, lovingly?

I have thought that the door which was opened to the Bridegroom and the wise virgins, and was closed to the foolish virgins, was the same as that spoken of in Luke xiii. 25, which evidently represents the separation between the legal and the gospel character: "Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the Master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in they presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." Abraham and Isaac and Jacob are in this kingdom of God, and so are all the prophets; these to whom he says, "I know you not," were also in that same kingdom, in its legal state, but now *they are thrust out;* there is no place for them in the kingdom of God in its gospel state. (Luke xiii. 28.)

By the legal character I mean the one, now as well as in the former dispensation, who depends upon some work done by himself, or upon some reason existing in himself, for entrance into the favor of God; and by the gospel character I mean the one whose only hope is that Jesus died for him, and that he passed with the Bridegroom from under the condemnation of the law into the kingdom of his grace and glory.

Those who shall seek to enter in and shall not be able, are those who seek righteousness, not by faith, but, as it were, by the works of the law. (Romans ix. 32.)

All of those who are referred to in parables, and other forms of teaching in the New Testament, as legal, worldly, carnal professors, are presented for the admonition of the Lord's people, and also for their assurance and comfort, to show them the real difference between a fleshly and a spiritual hope. Thus the people of God are often tried by questionings in their own souls as to whether they are not stony ground, thorny ground, or wayside hearers; or dissatisfied laborers, wanting more wages than was given to those who have worked less; or laborers in the legal field, contented with that work, like the elder son, and jealous of those who confess to having no good works, and yet claim that Jesus loves them; or like those who are knocking for entrance into the Lord's favor because of some merit they possess. The legal professor is not troubled with such doubts and questionings, but the Christian is, and in all the dear Savior's teaching the living soul is made to feel the powerful but tender and loving admonition: "Take heed therefore how ye hear;" "Strive to

enter in at the strait gate;" "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure."

This parable seems to present a proper sleeping time. No reproof is suggested because the virgins all slumbered and slept. It was night, the right time to sleep. But I do not understand how this could be applied to the gospel church; no time is allowed there for sleeping. The exhortation is, "Let us not sleep, as do others." Some may sleep, but it is disapproved of. Those who sleep are reproved. But here they *all* slept, and there is no word against it. The Bridegroom tarried; he had not yet come, therefore, it seems to me, the legal dispensation must be intended here. The virgins had gone forth to meet the Bridegroom. This would answer to the whole nation of Israel. They were promised the coming of the Savior, and they, as a nation, were all waiting for him, though not all waiting in faith. They were all recognized as heirs of that promise. "To them belonged the promises," and in this sense, as concerning the flesh, of which Christ was to come, the whole of Israel were as virgins waiting for the Bridegroom. It was a night dispensation, and they all slumbered and slept. They were all, apparently, alike. There was no way to tell which of them had oil in their vessels till the time should come to light their lamps. There was no way to distinguish between the righteous and the wicked while they were all under that fleshly covenant; all asleep. But when the Bridegroom was announced, when the gospel dispensation was ushered in, then they could discern. (Mal. iii. 18.)

The midnight is the turning point between two days. The announcement that the Bridegroom is coming is an assurance that the legal dispensation is at an end, and that the gospel morning has come. "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him." "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Now all are awake, and in the opening of gospel light all Israel is seen.

But now also the difference is seen between the wise and the foolish, between the legal and the gospel character, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not. The wise have the required oil for light, and they go in with the Bridegroom. He goes in but once to the marriage. There is no other going into the marriage. When Jesus arose from the dead and entered into his glory, he shut to the door between the legal and the gospel dispensation, and it is never to be opened again.

The Jews who are only Jews outwardly are now made manifest by not being ready to go in with the Bridegroom to the marriage, but seeking entrance on their own account. The wise virgins had oil with them because they were wise. The taking of oil did not make them wise, but was an evidence of true wisdom. Whatever the oil may represent, it was the gift of God. Grace had been given them. They had received that life which "is the gift of God," and "is the light of men." Theirs was that circumcision which is "of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

They represent, according to my understanding, those through all time who are Jews inwardly, not because of any merit in them or their works, but because of electing love and saving grace. These all go in with Jesus. To the end of time, as they are called by grace, they will all see that their entrance was in that one entrance of Jesus.

The other five took no oil, because they were foolish. They had no oil. The lamps they had would not give gospel light. They did not see the Bridegroom at all. When they did come and ask for admission it was upon the legal plea of merit in themselves. They represent the Jews after the flesh. The Lord says to them: I have no pleasure in you, neither will I accept an offering at your hands. (Mal. i. 10.) Those whom I understand the foolish virgins to represent seek to enter in by the works of the law today as well as when Jesus was in the flesh. To them he says: "I know you not, whence ye are: depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." Would he say that to those whom he has called by his grace, and whom he loves?

How often I have feared that to me the dear Savior would say—had already said, "I know you not." What searching of heart this fear has caused me; what searching of the word to see if there I could find any support for my hope that he was my Savior; what prayers and cries unto God for evidences of his love and favor. It has seemed sometimes that I had to cry, with Jonah, "I am cast out of thy sight," but I have still felt to look again toward his holy temple. If he should say to me, "I know you not;" "Depart from me," I could not feel to argue the case with him, could not show him any reason why he should open the door to such as I felt myself to be; not worthy of the least favorable notice from him. But O how this questioning, and this longing for his love and presence, have caused me to take heed how I heard, and to plead with him to "show me a token for good," to manifest himself as mine, and to guide me with his eye. Such deep soul-troubles are still mine at times, and many a dark night my soul is crying unto God, and thirsting for him. And so far the sweet answer has come, though it has at times appeared long delayed. The answer has never been to open the door, but to show it to me already open; to show me that I had been privileged to go in WITH the Bridegroom; to show me that I was accepted, not because of any kind of merit in me, but "accepted IN the Beloved."

MAY 5, 1905.

FRAGMENTS

"AND the counsel of peace shall be between them both."—Zech. vi. 13. Not between the Father and the Son, as has sometimes been said, but between the Priest and the King. He "shall sit and rule upon his throne; and he shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel [not council] of peace shall be between them both." A priesthood after the order of Aaron would not cause peace between a holy God and a sinner, for that priesthood was "after the law of a carnal command-

ment." There must arise a priest after the order of Melchisedec, who was both King and Priest. So Jesus was made a High Priest forever "after the power of an endless life," at the same time that he is King, "and is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." Now here is the counsel of peace. He has made an effectual offering as High Priest, and as King he receives the offering, and here is the way of peace. He is a Priest upon his throne, ruling upon his throne, while he builds the temple of the Lord, and thus "is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

You ask me to write upon "worshiping God in the Spirit," and you say: "I am so ignorant and unlearned it seems impossible for me to separate the flesh and the Spirit. When one is at peace the other is sorely troubled."

In all this you have spoken for me. How can I say anything to profit upon worshiping God in the Spirit when I am so often at a stand to know whether I know anything truly about it myself? I find self, my fleshly self, in all that I do, in so many different ways, that I often am at a loss to know where I am and what I am. I do know that God is not worshiped with men's hands, nor with the feet, nor even the voice; yet the hands, feet or voice are needed to give expression to that which is true worship. I am well assured that in me, that is, in my flesh, there dwells no good thing; I feel it every day, and at times I am most terribly cast down and discouraged by it. My only comfort at such times seems to be that Paul said that concerning himself. Lately I have been so glad and thankful that he said that, and some other things in the same line. He felt badly about it, and was forced by his grief to cry out, "O wretched man that I am!" But he was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write out these feelings for the comfort of the family of God.

Whether I have experienced the true spirit of worship is often a question with me. It seems to be so exalted a thing, the worship of the true and living God, that such as I am cannot reach that high; yet I remember that the leper worshiped Jesus, saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;" and the Syrophœnician woman worshiped him, saying, "Lord, help me." Now if that is worship I must have worshiped him, for I have known for more than half a century that Jesus can, if he will, make me clean; I know he has the power. The natural man does not know that blessed truth; it is only known by the teaching of the Spirit. The wisdom of the world teaches that Jesus will if he can and that his power depends upon the will and works of man. But the Spirit makes us know that his power is equal to his will. I know that I have cried in my spirit, "Lord, help me." That seems to be an acknowledgment of his power to do all that is needed to be done for our help, even to making us clean from sin, and as pure and white as snow. That is worship. The poor soul who

lies helpless upon a bed of suffering, alone, in poverty, in ignorance as regards worldly knowledge and wisdom, can worship the Lord in spirit as fully as one who is in health and endowed with all worldly riches and knowledge and comforts.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."—2 Cor. v. 10. We must receive the bad things we have done as well as the good. This is a severe judgment for a living soul who hates sin, but it is a just one. We hate and loathe these bad things, they are terribly distasteful and nauseous to us, and to have to carry them along with us wherever we go, to have them in our minds all the time, to be obliged to look at them, to receive their ill odor and to feel their bitter taste, this is indeed a sore punishment, this is reaping in tears what we have sown in self-confidence to the flesh. We might think that the apostle is here declaring that the Lord punishes his people for the bad things they do by taking away their property and their relatives, and afflicting their persons with some dreadful disease. Job's friends thought so, but they were mistaken; the punishments visited upon the Lord's people for disobedience are not such as the world could see or appreciate.

Physical health is a blessing for which we have reason to be thankful to the Lord. Those who have felt great weakness and severe pain of body know better than others the greatness of the blessing. We know the time of pain and weakness must come; this also comes as a blessing of the Lord to his people, for which, or in which, we are still to be thankful; for the apostle says, "In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." So while we give thanks every day for every day's blessings of a temporal kind, we must remember that the day of adversity will come, and try to pray for grace and strength against that day, to bear with patience whatever afflictions the Savior may see fit to send upon us. "In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him."—Eccl. vii. 14.

It seems hard to wait contentedly till tomorrow for tomorrow's bread; I want to be sure of it now. The form of prayer taught us is, "Give us *this day* our daily bread." There seems no special promise to the Lord's people for tomorrow concerning temporal things, but we are reminded that we know not what a day may bring forth, and are told not to take thought for tomorrow, in respect of temporal things; "for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof." Our entire trust is to be in the Lord. But I cannot trust of myself. I want to arrange for

tomorrow, though I know I cannot. I am worldly minded to a fearful degree. If the Lord did not hold me, and keep me, and hedge me in on every side, and cut me off continually from worldly dependence, I should never manifest any other than a worldly mind, if I ever do.

"CHRIST is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."—Gal. v. 4. It is evident that the apostle is saying this to brethren in Christ. No one can fall from grace who never had grace. It is one thing to fall from grace, and quite another thing to fall from a profession for want of grace. From grace to works is a great fall, but a fall that cannot happen to one who is not a child of grace. A child may fall among the beasts, but it is still a child, though greatly out of place, and away from the protection and comfort of its Father's house.

IT SEEMS to me that when one is prepared by the Spirit to write or speak upon the precious doctrine of God our Savior, he will not feel like writing ironically or with bitterness toward those whose views he is opposing. It is wearisome to read after one who ridicules those with whom he is engaged in conference or controversy, and applies harsh terms to them. "In meekness instructing them that oppose themselves," is the apostle's direction.

MR. IRONS says that Romans v. 1 is incorrectly punctuated, that the comma should follow the word justified; that the apostle did not mean to say that we are justified by faith, but that we have peace with God by faith. It seems Mr. Irons must have forgotten other declarations of the same apostle to the same effect as this, as we have it punctuated. Three times in the epistle to the Galatians he says distinctly that we are justified by faith. (Gal. ii. 16; iii. 8, 24.) Faith seems to be the active power by which we receive the justification which was affected by the death and resurrection of Christ, and when we thus experience that justification then we have peace with God.

A DEAR brother was lamenting his inability to remember the good things he heard in preaching; he feared they were not for him because he could not keep them in mind. "Last Sunday," he said, "I heard such a good sermon, and felt comforted while listening to it, but I had hardly left the house before I had forgotten it." I told him I saw a beautiful and vigorous stalk of wheat the other day, and it was crying. "What are you crying about?" I asked. "Why," it replied, "a sweet, refreshing shower fell on me yesterday, and now not a drop of it remains in sight." "You silly thing," I said, "the shower is inside of you." The good things that are ministered to the Lord's dear children by his gifts to the church go into the heart, into the life. The memory, however good it may be, can only retain the words, it

cannot keep the spirit and life that was in them when Jesus spoke them to our souls. Never mind if you cannot remember the words of the sermon; if you heard it with comfort it was because the doctrine dropped upon your soul as the rain, and its speech distilled as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass, and it has gone into your life and caused spiritual growth.

ANOTHER was lamenting his limited knowledge of the Bible. "It is true," he said, "that I get now and then a lovely glimpse of spiritual truth, and see some new and precious unfolding of the word of God's salvation, and occasionally have a sweet drink at the fountain of the water of life; but there is so much that I do not know, and so very little that I do understand, that I cannot help but cry." "Well," I said, "what would you think of a very thirsty man who has unexpectedly come to a 'brook in the way,' and after drinking till his soul is satisfied begins to cry because so much water is running by that he cannot drink?" You cannot drink that brook dry. Be satisfied and thankful that you can ever have even a sip of its refreshing water.

AUGUST 10, 1905.

WHERE THE DOVE DWELLS

(Song of Solomon ii. 14.)

"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock." The Savior thus addresses his church in her present state of existence, and thus presents her condition of safety. The dove, pursued by birds of prey, would seek and enter into one of the clefts or fissures in the rocks, where she was safe from her enemy. This figure is used by the heavenly Lover to show in what consists the safety of his bride. He himself is the Rock, and the clefts of the rock represent the sufferings and death which he endured by the stroke of the law for the salvation of his people. When Moses struck the rock waters gushed out; so when the law struck Jesus waters of salvation came forth for all his people. At the second time that Moses struck a rock, in the desert of Zin, which was nearly forty years after he struck the first rock, he spake unadvisedly with his lips, and the Lord told him that he could not go over into the promised land. (Num. xx. 12.) So when the law struck Jesus, the Rock of salvation, its work was done, and it must die. The law could not take the Lord's people into the gospel land; its work ends with the crucifixion of Christ.

When the Lord would show Moses his glory, and cause all his goodness to pass before him, he put Moses in a cleft of the rock on which he stood, and covered him with his hand while his glory passed by. A cleft in a rock is not a pleasant place to be forced into, but it is safe.

"I am crucified with Christ," Paul says. He says, "We which live [a spiritual life] are alway delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."—2

Cor. iv. He says, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made comformable unto his death." Here are the clefts of the rock where the dove is, where the Lord's people find their salvation. It is not in peace and quiet of mind, not while lying on beds of ivory and stretching themselves on their couches, that they find safety, but in affliction and trouble; in suffering with Christ; in "bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus." Here is Moses, held in a close, rough, unpleasant cleft of the flinty rock, trying to get out into liberty and see what is passing by; but for his salvation he is held down in a place he does not like, and covered with the Lord's hand. This is his salvation. If he had been outside of that rock he would have been destroyed. The power of the Lord's name which he pronounced would have been his destruction. No man could endure the last syllable of that name; it would destroy any of Adam's race: "And that will by no means clear the guilty." The Rock only could endure it. No man can see God's face and live, but hidden in Christ, in the cleft of the Rock, we can see his back parts; can see the glory after the Lord has passed by; can see the goodness and blessedness of what he has done.

How we fret, and worry, and complain at this constant trouble; this cutting off and hedging in; this daily crossing of our worldly desires, or the greater sorrow and shame when our fleshly desires are fulfilled; this constant dissatisfaction with ourselves and our works; this self-abhorrence and self-loathing; this "great tribulation;" this withering of the glory and goodness of man like the grass; this lack of joy and comfort in worldly things, and often such questioning as to our interest in heavenly things. But in this is our safety. Through great tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. All of those who stand before the great white throne have come out of great tribulation.

The dear Savior recognizes his people in this condition, and calls to them, as his dove, seeing them in the clefts of the Rock. Also he speaks of them as "in the secret places of the stairs." The stairs were in the right side of the temple, and it was by winding stairs that the people went up out of the first into the second story, and out of the second into the third story, winding about, hardly knowing whether they are going up or down, often in a dark, secret place of the winding way. But he tells them where they are, they are in the stairs all the time. Every change, every turn, every new trouble and affliction, however it appears to oppress them and sink them down, is really lifting them higher. They are rising, they are in a secret place, hidden from the world, who cannot see them as the Lord's people, and who cannot understand the Lord's way of taking his people up from the world, up from self, up from legal works; but they are still going up by winding stairs out of the legal into the gospel dispensation, and out of the things that are seen from day to day into "the

things which are not seen," into the "building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

So Jesus, the heavenly Lover, speaks to his dear people as an afflicted and poor people, and tells them where they are. He recognizes them as suffering with him, as crucified with him, and lets them know while in the furnace of affliction that "as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 Cor. i. 5. In their feeling of self-abhorrence and humiliation their faces are in the dust; they would not dare to speak to him except in a cry for mercy, nor even lift up their eyes to him; but in infinitely tender and prevailing love he calls to them by this endearing name, and says, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely." That voice is expressive of mourning on account of a sinful heart, but how sweetly it comes up into his ears on that account; that face is full of sorrow, and their eyes are pouring out tears unto God; but the sadness and the tears make the countenance comely in the sight of the dear Savior, for there are expressed a hunger and thirst after righteousness, and a hatred of all sin. That is what makes the face of a poor sinner lovely in the Lord's sight. And when they hear the loving accents of his voice speaking unto them, and with tender power acknowledging them as his dove, his bride, whom he has redeemed from all iniquity, and when they see, by faith, his face looking upon them in love, with "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" shining in it, how it makes their own sad faces lose the look of sadness and shine with holy and solemn joy because of his love to them. Then are they thankful that they have a dwelling-place in the clefts of the Rock, and in the secret places of the stairs, and glad that it is their blessed privilege to suffer with Christ, that they may by that fellowship of his sufferings be more effectually separated from the world, and glorified together with him.

October 26, 1905.

THE NEW TESTAMENT

(Hebrews ix. 16, 27, 28.)

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die." The inspired writer is not here merely stating the fact that all men must die; he is not impressing upon the mind the truth that it is appointed unto men to die. The whole force of this sentence is that it is appointed unto men to die once, not twice, not many times, but only once. The apostle has been speaking of the work of Moses and Aaron in the worldly sanctuary in accomplishing the service of God. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins; that is, the death of the sinner is necessary to satisfy the claims of justice. The high priest, in this ceremonial service, represented death when he entered into the second tabernacle alone once every year, not without blood. This "was a figure for the time then present." Of course the high priest could not offer his own blood, for then he could not make another offering

the next year. But Christ entered once into the holy place, even into heaven itself, by his own blood. He could not offer himself often, as the high priest did, "for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world [the Jewish world] hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself." He could not die often, for it is appointed unto men to die only once.

"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Here is the first part of a comparison introduced by the word "as," and intended to illustrate and open up some important thing concerning the sacrifice of Christ and the manifestation of those for whom he died. The second part of this comparison is introduced by the word "so": "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." The apostle has in this chapter introduced the figure of a man's will or testament, to illustrate the mediatorial work of Christ, and to show how by means of death he brought the New Testament into force, and secured to them that are called, the promise of eternal inheritance. He says: "And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance." The next expression proves that the apostle has in view as a figure the will or testament which a man makes, by which he bequeathes an inheritance. "For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."

Now it seems to me that the apostle still has this figure in view in the comparison presented in my text. It is important to consider that a man's testament is of no force while yet he lives. He may say to me, I have made my will, and have given to you ten thousand acres of land, and I have given that will into the custody of a bank, and it is safely locked up, and so you are sure of the property. But I do not own a rod of that land. He may make another will the next day and devise the land to another. Also it is necessary to consider that as soon as a man is dead all that was his now belongs to others. But how shall it be decided who are the heirs? It must be by the judgment of the government under which the man lived and held the title to his possessions. It is in this sense that I understand the apostle to use the expression, "but after this the judgment."

We are to keep in mind that the apostle is not merely stating the fact that it is appointed unto men to die once, only once; but he is using this as a comparison. "As"—"so." "As it is appointed unto men *once* to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was *once* offered," &c.

Earthly inheritances are greatly sought after by many, and the judgment of the government must be carefully rendered before any one can claim them, but this heavenly inheritance is not desired by any but the true heirs; they do desire it, and earnestly long for it, and seek for evidences that it is theirs.

Now all the blood that was used in the works of the law, "sprinkling the unclean," could not wash away one sin, nor could all that legal work cleanse the conscience of one sinner. But when Christ shed his precious blood he thereby obtained eternal redemption for all his people, and secured unto them the eternal inheritance promised in the New Testament, which is the new and "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure."

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." Who are they whose sins he bore? What is the judgment which has been rendered upon this subject? This same Jesus who died to bear the sins of many is now risen again, and is at the right hand of God, and is our Judge, our Lawgiver and our King. He has rendered the judgment: "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." The heirs of this spiritual inheritance, then, are those that look for him. This is the judgment concerning the heirs of God by this new testament.

But to know that we are looking for Jesus Christ! O, if we can only be sure of that. But so often we find our minds and our expectations fixed, apparently, upon worldly things. So often we feel ourselves too depraved, too sinful, too vile, too full of transgressions, to dare to think that we are among those who are looking for him. What right have such as we to look for him to come to us? How dare we say to him, "Come"? yet he has said with divine and loving authority, "Let him that heareth say, Come." And we are sometimes assured that we have heard his voice saying, "Come unto me." We have heard his words of love to the poor and needy, his words of sweet command to those who labor and are heavy laden. We have from time to time received evidences that he has given us rest. We have at times felt "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," keeping our hearts and minds. His words have at times dropped into our hearts with holy power, and our hearts have been drawn out to him in love and praise. The doctrine that declares the name of the Lord as our only Savior has sometimes dropped upon us like the rain, and has distilled as the dew; "as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass." Yes, at times we do feel assured that we are looking for him. We can do nothing of ourselves. When we look at ourselves we have to cry, Unclean. We are vile, we abhor ourselves; we have "the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead." But we do trust in him, Jesus is our only trust, our only hope, he is our righteousness, our life; yes, we look for him.

And what is the inheritance we are heirs of? Himself. "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." His appearing so far, and always while we are in the body, has been and shall yet be with sin, as our Sin-bearer, as having borne our sins. In our most exalted moments, while rejoicing in him, we remember him as having borne our griefs, as having suffered for our sins, and we thus know him in measure as having the fellowship of his sufferings, "being made conformable unto his death." We must always while in this mortal state bear "about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body." As the Savior while in the flesh was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, so must his followers be. It is in sorrow, in temptation, in affliction, that we know him while here; it is as having been tempted in all points like unto us that we know him as thus able to succor us who are tempted. But when he appears the second time it will be without sin unto salvation. That salvation, Peter says, is "ready to be revealed in the last time." That second appearing will be with no remembrance of sin; it will be to deliver us "from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God." It will be the end of mortality with us. When he appears the second time "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." He will be admired in all them that love him. Our vile body shall be changed then that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. We do not know what we shall be, nor do we in the spirit want to know. It is enough to know that we shall be conformed to his image, and shall appear with him in glory.

November 7, 1905.

FRAGMENTS

Am I afraid to "speak my mind" concerning any point of scriptural doctrine? Yes, certainly, I have often been afraid to assert as truth all that has passed through my mind, but not, I think, for fear of the opposition of men. I do not think I would be afraid to express in the presence of people anything which I was sure of as the truth of the Scriptures. But I have felt afraid that I might express something which the Scriptures would not sustain. I know how liable I am to be mistaken in my thoughts concerning the profound mysteries of the things of God, and therefore I often hesitate to present thoughts that have occurred to me, and conclusions I have arrived at in my meditations upon the Scriptures of truth, lest I might darken counsel by words without knowledge, and so confuse instead of helping the dear children of God. It is my desire and aim to have all my conclusions tried and proven, so that they shall be absolutely sustained by the Scriptures, and shall be commended to every spiritual man's conscience in the sight of God. (2 Cor. iv. 2.)

It is sometimes asked, Do you stand by and sustain such and such a brother in his position? I do not quite like that way of thinking

or speaking, as though I or another were of importance in this respect as having some theory or position in our charge. I do not think my call is to sustain this or that man, or myself even, in any position. What portion of truth is given me today I wish to faithfully present in speaking or writing, as opportunity is offered, in the fear of the Lord. If any brother sees me in any error, and can show it to me, or if the Spirit shows me tomorrow that I have expressed an erroneous thought, I want to be ready always to acknowledge it, and withdraw from it, and I hope I have been glad to do so. For here we see and know only in part.

In the work of the ministry we are not to seek to conform to and sustain this or that one, as though he were a leader; nor, on the other hand, to be disregardful of those who are as fathers in the church, but each preach the word as given to him. In doing this the one Spirit will be manifest as teaching all, and there will be an agreement, or rather, a oneness, in all the preaching, while there will be a sweet and rich variety in matter and manner.

There is no man, since the apostles, who has been given charge over others in this matter, in the church of God; no one has been appointed a leader whom others are to follow, and to whose position and doctrine they are to be conformed. Each must look alone unto him who has been appointed the Leader and Commander of the people, and look to him for word and doctrine, and also for direction as to the work he is to do. One branch of the Vine cannot direct or control another branch, nor can one be held in higher esteem than another because of a greater amount of fruit that it may bear, or as though its fruit were of a superior quality. The Vine says to each branch, "From me is thy fruit found." When each servant of God has given his own testimony, telling what he himself has seen and heard and felt, then true comfort and instruction will be ministered to the saints, and true fellowship will be experienced with each other by witnesses and brethren, and it will be manifest that one Spirit has directed all the servants, and that all the heavenly testimony has come from the one Witness, who is faithful and true.

"God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." In the heavens of eternal glory, where the saints shall be after they leave this mortal state, there will be no tears to wipe away. The time of tears is now, in this time state, in the flesh, in this world of sin and temptation and sorrow; and it is now, in this gospel dispensation, that they are wiped away by the Savior, who is in the midst of the throne, and who feeds those who have come out of great tribulation, and who are before his throne, and leads them to living fountains of water. (Rev. vii.) Weeping endures for the night. During the night of the legal dispensation those who feel the condemnation of the law have no release from sorrow; there is no wiping away of their tears. All their days are passed away in God's wrath. (Psalms xc. 9.) However great

their strength may be, it is "labor and sorrow," never labor and joy, because their works are vain, and cannot satisfy the law. "But joy cometh in the morning" of the gospel dispensation, when the Lord's work appears to his servants; then are the tears wiped away. Sorrow comes again when we feel our sinfulness, and the tears flow, but again and again they are wiped away. While we are in this mortal state of existence there will always be cause enough in ourselves for tears on account of our transgressions, and of our corrupt nature. Only in the continual revelation of Christ to our souls as our sin-bearer and our righteousness can we find abiding joy and comfort. Whenever in our affliction and grief we are enabled by faith to realize his presence, to experience the power of his word of grace and to feel his love in our poor hearts, then sorrow is gone as we appear before the throne, and thus he ministers consolation and wipes away our tears.

How is it that one who has led a good and innocent life in the sight of men should, when made alive spiritually, feel as much trouble and sorrow on account of a sinful heart as one who has been guilty of outbreaking sins? We know that naturally there is a great difference of feeling between one of a delicate taste and a refined disposition, and one who is of a coarse and depraved habit of mind, so that what the one would shrink from with disgust and abhorrence, the other would not dislike at all. But we know that only divine life in the soul can cause one to see sinfulness within himself, and to hate and loathe it. It is the sinfulness more than the sin which fills him with self-abhorrence. By the Holy Spirit of God the capability of wickedness in our fallen nature is made known to us, and under this experience the one who has led a moral life abhors himself, and sees no one more vile than he. So Benjamin, with whom Joseph's divining cup was found, was made in that wonderful transaction to appear as having stolen the cup, and therefore the greatest sinner among them. Yet all of them were viler than he, having committed a terrible crime in which he had no part. When the divining cup of our spiritual Joseph is found with any one, then he feels in his own heart all the sin of the one man by whose "disobedience many were made sinners."

It was not in the hope of getting out of the lion's den, nor after he had been taken out, that Daniel had his greatest joy and comfort, but in the presence of the Lord while he was there, and in the knowledge that the angel of the Lord had shut the lions' mouths. It was not in the prospect of getting out of the fiery furnace, nor after they had come out, that the three Hebrew children experienced the chief blessing of their lives, but it was in the presence of the Son of God with them in the furnace, and that faith in him which was given them in such measure that by it they quenched the violence of the fire, so that the flames could not kindle upon them.

It is in the tribulation that we are enabled most sensibly to rejoice, for there is our dear Savior most clearly manifest to our souls. It is while bearing about his dying in our body that his life is manifest in our mortal flesh. It is in the fellowship of his sufferings that we know the fellowship of his joy. (2 Cor. iv.)

When those brethren who say that time salvation is conditional, and is left dependent upon the will of the creature, are speaking of their own daily exercises they talk as the rest of us do. They acknowledge their inability to live as they want to live, confess that their life is full of faults, mourn their hardness of heart, acknowledge that they transgress daily in thought and word and deed, and complain of their darkness of mind and coldness in regard to spiritual things. No child of God would think of saying to one whose soul is cast down within him, If you would live better and be more obedient you would not be so cast down and so full of doubts and fears. We have heard from the world that "one can have all the religion he will live for," and that they can win God's favor and be blest by being obedient whenever they wish to, or they can lose that favor by being disobedient. But we do not look for that kind of talk from exercised souls who are sick of sin, and sick of themselves on account of sin, and who have to acknowledge, "When I would do good, evil is present with me," and to cry, "O wretched man that I am!"

When one is truly exhorted to turn from error in walk or doctrine it is not merely that he may "feel better," but that he may honor God. A hunger after righteousness and a hatred of sin are the most powerful motives that can be thought of to influence the actions; infinitely more powerful than hope of reward or fear of punishment. The apostle when exhorting his brethren presented to them as a good motive their remembrance of the consolation in Christ, the comfort of love, the fellowship of the Spirit and the bowels and mercies, which they had experienced. (Phil. ii. 1.) What could there be more likely to move them? Yet we urge others, and ourselves, to do what we think is right, whether it will make us "feel better" or not. Obedience to the Lord's will worked in our hearts by him, and worked out in our lives, may be followed not only by persecution and worldly loss, but by darkness of mind. That ought to make no difference. The obedience of the dear Savior brought agony and death upon him, and we are followers of him even in this. But though we have affliction in the world, in him we shall have peace. We shall, in the exercise of true faith, be enabled to say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

Did you, in the innermost recesses of your soul, ever come to the Lord with the plea for his favor that you had done some obedient work for which you expected that reward? What Jesus has done is our only plea, and never what we have done. But how thankful we are when we have been enabled to walk in obedience to the Lord. In

the keeping of his judgments is great reward. "If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die." Daily we learn that we must have grace in order to serve God with reverence and godly fear, and whenever we have done any gospel work we thankfully say, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me."

"THOU hast magnified thy word above all thy name."—Psalms cxxxviii. 2. The name of the Lord includes all his essential power, wisdom, might, majesty and glory. His word expresses, puts forth, brings into manifestation, all of those glorious attributes and perfections that belong to him, and which are enfolded in his unspeakable name. Jesus is the Word of God; he is declared to be "the power of God, and the wisdom of God."—1 Cor. i. 24. In the name of the Lord was eternally all the power and wisdom necessary to create the heavens and the earth, and to command "the light to shine out of darkness." The Word of the Lord manifested and made known that power and wisdom, causing that incomprehensible work to be done. Thus his Word was magnified above all his name in the natural creation. So also in salvation. The Word which was in the beginning with God, and was God, "was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."

Here we have that eternal life which was in the Word, and which was the light of men. We cannot look to any other source for light. This Word is the Fountain of light, as it is the Fountain of life. The inspired Scriptures of truth are put forth by the Word. They are the record of the Word. We find in them, and only there, "the form of sound words;" we cannot reason upon spiritual things outside of that written word, nor against it. Upon every point of doctrine and order we are told to "Hold fast the form of sound words" which we have heard of the apostle Paul and other inspired writers. If the Scriptures tell us that "The worlds were framed by the word of God: so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear," we are not at liberty to say that such could not be the case, because something cannot be made out of nothing. We are to take the inspired words and hold them fast against all the opposition of the wisdom of this world, and faith does so take and hold them.

Concerning the work of creation, the work of salvation, the final state of the wicked, the resurrection of the dead, and all the other mighty mysteries presented in the Scriptures, which declare the works of the Lord, how insistently we keep trying to explain how the Lord does his wonderful works, and to fill up what the Scriptures seem to lack in explaining the "how," and the "wherefore." But our efforts are always vain, and our minds are baffled and turned back at every point, failing to understand the wonderful works of God, even when we feel their blessed power; for, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

How pleasant and restful it is for us, poor and ignorant as we are, to be given an implicit and confiding trust in the Lord, as we read the written word, that we may receive it, not as the word of man, but as it is indeed, the word of God, (1 Thess. ii. 13,) and to trust that the Lord will in his own time and way open its precious meaning to our understandings, and apply it with power to our souls. How good it is when we contemplate the glorious but inscrutable mystery of the resurrection, which will ever remain a mystery until it is experienced; to feel the solemn assurance of faith that this same poor sinner who sorrows and suffers and hopes and dies here, will in the resurrection be pure and incorruptible in heaven, satisfied with the likeness of Jesus, and eternally filled with joy.

JANUARY 29, 1906.

THE GREATER WORKS

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." —John xiv. 12.

In the preceding part of this chapter, in conversation with his disciples, Jesus has declared the oneness of his Father and himself, not as an abstract doctrine, but as something absolutely necessary to their salvation, and as already embraced in their experience and knowledge. In the last of the preceding chapter Peter is told of a terrible crime which he will commit within a few hours, which will bring him to the verge of despair, filled with bitterest shame and self-loathing, causing him to appear to himself as the vilest of men, and as justly cast away from the favor and love of Jesus. This is the condition in which every one of the Lord's people sees himself when his eyes are fully opened to the depravity of his carnal mind and heart. And this sense of vileness and feeling of self-abhorrence are necessary in order to the revelation of Jesus to his people as the Son of God, and as one with the Father. It is just at this point in their experience, this time of Jacob's trouble, "when all faces are turned into paleness" (Jer. xxx. 6, 7,) that Jesus says, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me." This is the way that Jacob is saved out of that great and peculiar trouble, as the Lord by the prophet declares he shall be. It is not by anything that we can do, or that any man can do for us, that salvation comes to us, but by the revelation of Jesus to our souls as the Son of the Father, as having all power in heaven and in earth, and as going away into death, and through death into his kingdom, taking death forever out of the way, and so preparing a place for us. And also it is by causing these Jacobs to believe in Jesus, by the working of the mighty resurrection power of God in their hearts. When Jesus says, "Ye believe in God, believe also in me," that belief is wrought in them by the mighty power of God which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead. (Eph. i. 19, 20.)

When Jesus tells them, "Whither I go ye know, and the way ye know," Thomas answers for them all: "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" But this knowledge is in their knowledge of Jesus, and in that fellowship of his sufferings which all his people begin to have when he calls them. His answer is given in words which cover the whole ground of the gospel, and all the experience of the saints: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him."

The work of salvation is first wrought in the heart by the holy Spirit of God, and then by the same Spirit it is made known to them. Ye know the way, he says to them; ye know the Father; then in his own time and way he shows them where and what that knowledge is within their souls.

"Philip saith unto him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Jesus does not answer by pointing away outside of themselves. He does not point upward to the heavens, but says, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works." Here we observe the "words" and the "works" are identical. As soon as the word of Jesus is spoken the work is done. He spake and it was done. No interval here between the spoken word of God in Christ and the finished work.

Here also we see the eternal oneness of the Father and the Son, which is also gloriously declared in the dear Savior's prayer to the Father: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."—John xvii. 21-23.

Here observe that the believer in Jesus is, by that belief, wrought in him by the mighty power of God, brought into manifest union with the Father and the Son. And when Jesus speaks, here and in his prayer, of being in the Father and the Father in him, he has reference all the time to an experience of that union in the hearts of his people. Therefore he says, "Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake."

It is the word of Jesus that causes the poor soul to believe, but it is because of the works which have been wrought in him. Those works, for whose sake Jesus tells us to believe, are not works brought to our attention from without, and looked upon by us from a distance; but

they are seen, if seen at all, within our own souls. The Father in the Son has done those works there, working in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. ii. 13.)

Now all this glorious doctrine of the oneness of Jesus and his Father has reference to the salvation of poor sinners, called by grace, and made to know, in the Lord's own time and way, that Jesus has revealed to them the Father (Matt. xi. 27,) and that because they are sons "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts, crying, Abba, Father."—Gal. iv. 6.

Thus we come to the text, which shows to us that the believer in the work of salvation is one with Jesus, as he is one with the Father; that in all of the experience of grace that oneness of Jesus with his people is made manifest; that while Christ is in us the hope of glory, we are "created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."—Eph. ii. 10. He is in us and we are in him.

The works that Jesus did while in the days of his flesh were all works that could be seen of men, and in that sense we may speak of them as natural or literal works. But they all had a spiritual significance, as did also all his parables and teaching and that could not be seen or understood by any but those to whom it was given. So Jesus said to some, "Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word." "Unto you," he said to his disciples, "it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God; but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables."

But in all those works of Jesus there was required faith in the one upon whom, or in whose behalf, the works were done. That faith is the evidence of things not seen, upon which belief is founded. Jesus could do mighty works in his own country because of their unbelief. (Mark vi. 5; Matt. xiii. 58.) To one or more he said, "Thy faith hath saved thee." To a father who asked help for his son he said, "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." —Mark ix. 23. He had power to give the needed faith in a moment. He even spoke of the dead as a believer, when approaching the grave of Lazarus: "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."

I cannot understand the words of the text to refer to the power which Jesus gave his disciples to tread on serpents, and that nothing should by any means hurt them (Luke x. 19,) nor to the signs that should follow those who believed the apostles' preaching, that they should cast out devils, speak with new tongues, take up serpents, not be hurt by drinking any deadly thing, and lay hands on the sick and they should recover. (Mark xvi. 17.) These signs did follow the apostles' teaching, but did not continue after the apostolic work was done, and the church established and set in order by them; nor do I find that we are taught by the apostles to expect those literal signs in

the succeeding ages of the church, though I believe their spiritual significance remains in force.

The former part of this chapter tells us the meaning of this. The words and works of Jesus were done by the Father who was in him, and he did them in the Father. So the works of Jesus are wrought in his people, and these are the good works unto which they are created in Christ, and they do them in him. It is the same works which he does that they do by a living faith in him, as it is the same works that Jesus did which he said the Father who dwelleth in him did. Jesus did not say that he who believeth in him shall do other works of the same kind as those which he does, but that he shall do the same works. The meaning of what he says is not that he instructs them in regard to his works so that they can go away from him and do them of themselves. In their works the believers in Christ are never separate from him, but he is with them in all their work always, "even unto the end of the world."

We have no reliable evidence that any one of the Lord's people has ever laid hands on the sick and healed them, or drank any deadly thing without hurt, or cast out devils, or spoken with new tongues, since the apostolic work was finished. These were special signs given to follow them that believed the preaching of the apostles. But in this they were not doing in any sense the works that Jesus did, for he never took up serpents or drank any deadly thing.

Now we are to remember again the power and prominence of faith in all the New Testament. We remember how the Savior recognized it in all for whom, and at whose request, he did works of healing and deliverance from peril, and how he ascribed the works which he did in and for them to the faith that was in them. In all this he is exalted, for the faith in them is his gift and work, and they are thus exalted in him. We see also how in all the apostles' works and writings, and especially in that portion of Hebrews which the apostle devotes especially to examples of faith, power is ascribed to this wonderful and mysterious grace of faith, and it is brought continually into prominent view. Observe how many things beyond the power of man are said to have been done by men, not working in any strength of their own, but by faith. All these things are recognized in the Old Testament Scriptures as done by the power of God.

When we are enabled by faith to see these examples of faith, and to observe all the various works ascribed to it, we are made to see that this faith is the power given the Lord's people to see and experience the purpose, power and work of God in Christ; and so by the witness received by Abel that he was righteous; by the translation of Enoch; by the going out of Abraham from his own country at the call of God; by his offering up of Isaac; by the blessing by Isaac of Jacob and Esau concerning things to come; by the hiding of Moses by his parents three months because they saw that he was a proper child; by the passing of Israel through the Red Sea as on dry land; by the fall-

ing of the walls of Jericho; by kingdoms subdued, righteousness wrought, promises obtained, the mouths of lions stopped, the violence of fire quenched, the dead raised to life again; by tortures and cruel mockings and scourgings endured; by all these wonders recorded in the Old Testament, and the wonderful works of God in and for his people recalled and presented here by the apostle as the works of men done by faith, we see how faith is the substance in our own souls of things hoped for, and the evidence in ourselves of those things which the Lord has made us hope for.

"And greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father." What can be meant by the greater works? Does the Savior here or elsewhere compare his own works or the good works of his disciples with each other, and place some above others? Of his own works, is the raising of Jairus' daughter or the widow's son a greater work than healing the lame man at the pool of Bethesda, or causing the dumb to speak? Was the rebuking of the wind and the raging of the water, so that there was a great calm, a greater work than turning the water into wine? It is not in that way, I think, that we are to understand that some works are greater than others. But in the same sense in which Jesus speaks of himself as greater than Solomon or Jonah. They were but types of Jesus, and the reality is always greater than the type; the substance is always greater than the shadow. So these literal works of opening the blind eyes, unstopping the deaf ears, casting out devils, raising the dead, quieting the stormy winds and the raging of the waters, causing a fish to be found with money enough to pay tribute, and driving the money-changers out of the temple—all these works which men could see were but as types, patterns, illustrations, of those spiritual works which should be manifested in and to his church and people after he had finished the work of redemption and had gone unto his Father.

These are the greater works which those shall do who believe on him. They are greater as the reality is greater than the pattern, as spiritual and eternal things are greater than things that pertain to this world and the limited and unsubstantial things of time. The coming up out of the state of death in sin by the quickening power of the Spirit of God into eternal life, is a greater work than the coming of Lazarus out of the grave where he had lain four days. The opening of eyes blind to the way of salvation, and of ears that have never heard the truth, so that the poor soul is made to rejoice in seeing the beauty of gospel things, and in hearing the music of Jesus' voice, which the natural eye has not seen, nor the natural ear heard, is a greater work than the opening of the natural eyes and the natural ears. To think of Jesus commanding the winds and waves to be still, and saying to the terrified disciples, "It is I; be not afraid," is an unspeakable wonder, and awakens our admiration and praise. But how much greater the work when Jesus appears, while the waves of God's wrath are going over our souls, so that we cry out in abso-

lute fear as the terrors of death compass us about, and the pains of hell get hold upon us, and says, "Peace, be still." Then we wonder where those fears have gone. Then the peace of God which passeth all understanding keeps our hearts and minds, and we wonder at that. But most of all we wonder to find that when Jesus appears, immediately we are at the land whither we went. When he comes we want nothing more.

The first thing in all these wonderful works of grace in the soul is faith. That is the first of the gifts of God to the living soul. It comes with divine life; it sees the loving purpose of God in Christ. By that faith we feel his presence and his power. Through faith the salvation which is by grace comes to us. By faith we live. "The just shall live by faith." By faith we walk. Christ walks in us. I will "walk in them." By faith, as a shield, we fight against the devil, resisting all his fiery darts. (Eph. vi. 16.) By faith we "fight the good fight of faith." Faith, with love, is a good breastplate. By faith in the name of Jesus the lame man at the beautiful gate of the temple was healed. (Acts iii. 16.) Paul saw that the man who had never walked had faith to be healed. (Acts xiv. 9.) By faith in Jesus the man lame in a spiritual sense leaps like an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sings. Faith is not the product of any human power or wisdom. No man can obtain it by labor, skill or money; it is the gift of God. The word occurs but twice in the Old Testament, but the New Testament is full of it.

Faith often seems weak, and sometimes gone altogether. Then our belief is not a spiritual but a natural thing, and we are almost ready (it seems) to go into the doctrines and works of the world. Then the works of faith are at a low ebb, or apparently gone altogether out of sight. But the works of the flesh begin to assert themselves, and clamor for recognition, and we are very apt to turn in with them. But for all the children of promise, who are the chosen of God, and who can live only by faith, the Lord has graciously and mercifully provided that when they turn to the worldly doctrine, and to the wisdom of the world, and live after the flesh, they shall die. That death may be sudden and terrible, or it may be slow and prolonged. But in the end the poor soul will feel the lack of all life and comfort, or rather, will feel the stirrings and strugglings of life again calling for spiritual substance, and for a deliverance from the body of this death. Then the works of faith will again appear, and will seem doubly precious. How thankfully and gladly we turn again to do the first works, to do the works of Jesus, to walk by faith in his blessed name, to feel a longing for the assurance that the Lord is working in us "both to will and to do of his good pleasure," and to call upon him, and entreat him for power to work out that salvation which he works in us. Then how glorious appears to us the truth of the "mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ." The Father in the Son and the Son in the Father, and all his people one in Jesus, as he is one

in the Father, and the works of the Father and the Son made manifest in the works of the believer wrought by faith in Christ. All of our works which we do acceptably are the works that Jesus does in us, and we do them in him. "He that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God." —John iii. 21. These works of faith can never be marred, never be corrupted, never be overcome. They are the joy and comfort of God's people here in time, and their only true and unfailing joy, and they present a sure foundation for eternal joy and blessedness; for they show the believer, however weak and trembling he may feel, to be one with Jesus and his Father, and to have been loved by the Father with the same everlasting love with which he loved the Son. (John xvii.)

O what an unspeakable wonder and blessing is that love of God felt in the heart of a poor, self-abhorring sinner; it passeth knowledge. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." It is not merely an emotion, but a holy, never-varying principle, an abiding substance. It never fails to guide us right; it always tells us the right thing to say and do; it never fails to comfort and bless; it never forsakes one in whose heart it has once been felt; it is greater than either faith or hope, for they are only for time, while love is eternal. Paul's prayer for the brethren at Ephesus was that they, being rooted and grounded in love, might be able to comprehend, with all saints, what is the length and breadth and depth and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that they might be filled with all the fullness of God. And he assures us of his persuasion that "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus."

March, 1906.

THE PREACHER TO YOUNG MEN

"Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity."—Eccl. xi. 9, 10.

In both the book of Proverbs and this book of Ecclesiastes, or the Preacher, Wisdom is talking to her children. In the words of the text those are addressed who are subjects of grace, but who are young in this life. In this language of the Preacher we find some of the acceptable words which he sought to find out, even words of truth. These words of the wise are as goads, causing them to whom they are spoken to move forward in the path of duty, and are "as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are all given from one shepherd." The nails which fasten the teachings of wisdom in the heart, and the goads which urge us forward, are given by our good

Shepherd, and are as sure evidences of his tender care, and are as sweet food to the exercised soul, as are his precious promises. These are plain words, fraught with most important meaning. They mean just what they say. They express a serious admonition, but there is no threat in them. The young man is not told to do what is wrong and then threatened with punishment for it. Gospel language is not ironical. The young man of grace is told to rejoice in his youth. This he naturally must do; he has buoyancy and vigor peculiar to this time of life, and he does rejoice in them. It is a pleasure for him to live, and a joy to exert his strength of body and to exercise his mental powers. The Preacher gives him to understand that this is not wrong, not sinful. He does not know the infirmities of age, and the spirit and teaching of the gospel do not require him to try to repress the ardor and stifle the pleasurable emotions that belong to youth.

The young man who is here addressed has had an experience of grace; he has felt his sins forgiven, and now rejoices in a hope of salvation through Jesus; he feels a new controlling power within him, and desires to live free from sin; he realizes that his nature is still sinful, and not to be trusted, but he is given to trust in Jesus, and to look to him alone for help and for salvation; he desires to be sober and grave, and to walk humbly before God. But he is in the morning of life, and as he joins in the praise and worship of God there is a vivacity in his heart and mind which will manifest itself in his actions, in his voice, in his expressions. This he cannot and need not try to suppress. This mental and physical freshness and pleasure of life will be felt and shown in his daily walk and conversation.

In this sense the young man is told to walk in the ways of his heart, and in the sight of his eyes. The ways of his young heart and the sight of his undimmed eyes are not like those of an old man, and he cannot make it appear as though they were, nor would it be right for him to assume what he does not feel. He does not know the decrepitude of age, and he cannot honestly appear as though he did. That will come to him in its time, if he remains long in this world, and the years will soon enough draw nigh when he shall say, "I have no pleasure in them." But now, in the days of his youth, he does have a natural pleasure in the years as they come to him, and he may know that this pleasure in itself is not wrong, and that he can take the cheerfulness of his heart as properly belonging to him in this early time of his life.

Now comes a serious and most important declaration: "But know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment." This solemn truth is to be taken into careful consideration now, while in the midst of youthful activities, and always, during all the years of our life upon the earth, we are to keep in mind that "God will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." This is the concluding declaration of this wise Preacher. This Judge is Jesus; he is our Lawgiver, he is our Judge, he is our King, he will save us. His judgment-seat, in regard to the

judgment here spoken of, is in the gospel church; he is in the midst of her. It is also in the heart of every child of God. Christ is in every one of them the hope of glory. By them, and by them alone, are his judgments known and felt in this time state. A living soul cannot sin wilfully without feeling the judgments of the righteous Judge against him. Can a living man thrust his hand into the fire without feeling pain? Can one put live coals into his bosom without hurt? No more can one who has divine life come into contact with sin without suffering. The judgment is rendered at once, when the sin is committed. The knowledge of it, the meaning of the stripes, what they are for, may be kept back for a time, but the judgment will be effectual.

We observe that it is not only evil things, but also good things, which are to be brought into judgment. We are apt to read this as though it meant that to be brought into judgment were necessarily to be condemned, but this is not so; the judgment is for or against us, according to the character of our work, whether good or evil, and the character of our work depends upon the motive or spirit which directed it. If we are moved by the vain and selfish spirit of the flesh in what we do, seeking our own glory or the gratification of our carnal desires, then our work is evil in the sight of God, however good it may appear in the sight of men. But if the Spirit of him who raised up Jesus from the dead move or quicken us in doing the work, then it is good, our conscience clear of blame, and the judgment in our favor. (Romans viii. 11-13.)

What a divine favor it is to be enabled by the Holy Spirit to so walk that we may have a conscience void of offense toward God and toward man. Paul exercised himself to this end. (Acts xiv. 16.) Zechariah and Elizabeth walked in all the ordinances of God's house blameless. It may seem that few attain to this condition, so many of those we esteem more perfect are constantly complaining of their sinfulness and heart wanderings. We are to remember, however, that our sinful nature is a burden and a bondage of corruption to every one who has the life of Jesus in the soul, and that the most spiritual Christian, though mercifully kept from sinful conduct, feels the sinfulness of his nature so deeply that he must, like Hezekiah, walk softly before the Lord all his days in the bitterness of his soul.

Now comes the solemn and loving admonition, "Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity." What a solemn reminder is given us in this last sentence of how little of value there is in this mortal life for us. While we are told that it is our privilege to rejoice in our youth, yet we are reminded that youth is soon gone, and that even while it lasts it is only vanity; we cannot build any permanent happiness upon it. All the goodness and glory of man upon the earth are only as the grass, and the flower of grass. How soon the grass withers and the

flower fades. Why then should one ever hesitate between a worldly benefit and a gospel duty?

Notice what precedes our text, and how the Preacher brings our minds to this subject: "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun; but if a man live many years, and rejoice in them all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many." Then this solemn conclusion: "All that cometh is vanity." So far, then, as this mortal life is concerned, not only the sweet and pleasant seasons of childhood and youth, but all the years to come, have nothing for us but vanity. We are given the privilege of enjoying the things of this world for the brief period of our stay here, especially in our earlier years, but are carefully enjoined to "use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away."—1 Cor. vii. 31. In youth or old age we are always to seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.

How shall the young man remove sorrow from his heart, and put away evil from his flesh? By taking heed to his way according to the Lord's word; (Psalms cxix. 9;) by a most careful attention to all the commandments, teachings, admonitions, exhortations and reproofs of the gospel; by putting off "the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts," and putting on the new man, "which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness;" by keeping under the body and bringing it into subjection; by not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together; by walking in the Spirit, as we live in the Spirit. It is only by grace that any man can do this. We must have grace that we may serve God acceptably. But this grace is sure to be given according as we truly feel our need of it. Jesus is full of grace, and each one of his children will in his necessity find that grace sufficient for him. All this is told in the next verse, where the same young man is still addressed: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them." Then follows a striking description of the evil days to come to those who stay long in this world, and the pleasureless years that will soon be drawing nigh. Nowhere else can be found so touching and pathetic a description of the infirmities of old age. The peculiar figurative language used in picturing these infirmities makes the description doubly sad and mournful; it emphasizes the declaration that "all that cometh is vanity;" it shows good reason why the young man should not set his heart upon worldly treasures, nor indulge in expectations of greater worldly good, and more enduring pleasures, in the years to come; it shows him that the failing powers of nature will disappoint such expectations, and how, as the sun and light and moon and stars become darkened to his failing sight, and the clouds return after the rain, and the grasshopper becomes a burden, he will be compelled to say of those years, "I have no pleasure in them." But there is one thing that will remain ever fresh,

and new, and full of joy to him who has ever once felt its power and blessedness, and that is the word of our God. Though all other things fail, this will never fail, but endures forever.

It is at this time of life that the children of wisdom feel the power of this command with them: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." It is not merely an exhortation, not a suggestion for them to consider, but a word of power; it is the word and work of Jesus in the soul, now made manifest in this time of greatest temptation to seek worldly pleasures and to lay up worldly treasures. The world is new and attractive to the young man exulting in the strength and freshness of youth, and eager to join in all the activities that are all around him. How liable he is to listen to worldly-minded men, and to turn away from the path of strict integrity, in his earnest pursuit of worldly interests. It is now that he feels the restraints of the Spirit of life within his soul; it is now that the voice of Wisdom is heard within him saying, "My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother: for they shall be an ornament of grace unto thy head, and chains about thy neck. My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."—Prov. i. 8-10.

God is not only our Creator in the earthy Adam, but also our Creator in Christ. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." This spiritual creation is in "righteousness and true holiness," and is "unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." And unto this one, in this morning of life, comes this tender and solemn admonition to remember his spiritual Creator; to remember Jesus and all of his commandments, which he has written in the fleshy tables of the heart. All of the gospel is full of this loving care to the children of God. Jesus speaks to this new heart of grace, and the apostles all are careful to stir up the pure minds of the Lord's people by way of remembrance of the things of Jesus. As you go about your business in this world, so busy and so full of wickedness, remember Jesus in this sweet command, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness." As you meet men of the world in your worldly concerns, do not forget the words of the apostle of Jesus, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." And again, "Walk honestly toward them that are without." And again, "Flee also youthful lusts." Let all the precious words of Jesus abide in you; they are better than all the riches and honors of this world. Neither the learning and wisdom of the world, nor its honors, nor its gold and silver, are for a moment to be compared with the words of Jesus and his love and favor felt in the soul.

Those who are called by grace are given a tender conscience in the fear of the Lord, which is a blessing of infinite value. It is especially noticeable in the young. By frequent contact with evil, and by thoughtless yielding from time to time, this conscience may become defiled and seared, so that children of God may be left to go into gross wrong without apparent check of conscience. But such a condition

cannot last very long; divine life in the soul must soon manifest its abhorrence of all sin; the time must soon come to those who have wandered from the right way when the terror of the Lord will be felt by them. (2 Cor. v. 11.) The Lord knows how to effectually punish his erring children, and at the same time make them feel the tenderness of his love to them. Peter's denial of Jesus with curses was terrible, but it was necessary in order that he might know himself; then only a look from the Savior was necessary to make Peter see the greatness of Jesus' love for him, and to make him weep bitterly. The Lord says to his people now, as of old, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."—Amos iii. 2. If under the law of Moses every transgression was punished, how shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation? (Heb. ii. 2, 3.) This punishment of the Lord's people, in which for their good he visits their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquities with stripes, (Psalms lxxxix.) is not by way of atonement, for they are made to know that Jesus effectually put away all their sins by the sacrifice of himself. It is not the law of Moses that we are under, but the law of the Spirit of life in Christ. Paul manifests the tender love and care of the Spirit of Christ for all his wandering children when he says to the Corinthian Church concerning one who had grossly sinned, and whom he had sternly commanded them to put away, "Sufficient to such a man is this punishment, which was inflicted of many. So that contrariwise ye ought rather to forgive him, and comfort him, lest perhaps such a one should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow." —2 Cor. ii. 6, 7.

There have been those who have held the doctrine of the absolute sovereignty of God as absolving them from any responsibility for their conduct, and as leaving them free to fulfill the lusts of the flesh with impunity. Such do not give evidence of divine life. The Lord's people will be tempted, as Jesus was, to cast themselves down; but he conquered for them, and in his own time he will give them the banner to be displayed in the face of the enemy, and they will be enabled to answer in his name. "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." Those who truly believe in the sovereign power and predestination of God will be found very tender of conscience, and very jealous for the honor of God; they believe that God's eternal purpose includes everything that takes place in this world. If we could believe that one thing could occur which the Lord wished had not occurred, and which he did not intend, how could we trust in him any more? But the Lord so works his will in his people that the more they see of this absolute sovereignty of God, the more they desire to walk carefully before him, in obedience to all of his commands; and also they learn the more every day that Jesus is their life and righteousness, and that without him they can do nothing.

Those who have a spiritual belief in the truth of predestination do not go about doing a thing because they think the Lord predestinated

it; they know nothing of what God has predestinated until it comes to pass; they are given a new principle in their hearts to guide them, and that is the fear of the Lord, which is to hate evil. When they sin they do not charge their sin upon the predestination of God. The Lord moved David against Israel to number them, but David did not plead that as an excuse, but said, "I have sinned, and I have done wickedly." —2 Sam. xxiv. 1-17.

What a good habit it is to be constant in our attendance upon all the meetings of the church, and upon all the ordinances of the dear Savior, even though we know every day that we cannot bring our minds into a worshipful state. What a blessing it is to be given a desire, and a humble, spiritual determination to spend our years in youth and manhood in the holy service of God, even though we feel more and more how unworthy and unfit we are to engage in that pure service. How good it is to grow up, as it were, in the family of God. How great a blessing it is to have the wish in our poor hearts that we might subordinate all worldly things to the things of the Spirit; that we might truly rejoice in our youth, while it lasts, not by indulging in vain amusements or selfish works but in acts of devotion to the Lord; in speaking of his goodness and talking of his power; in helping the needy, and in doing what we find to do in our earthly lot in the fear and love of God. We may well seek the Lord in this way, and may well hope that he will be found of us, unworthy and unprofitable as we are, and that he will lead us in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

To one who has been favored to feel in some degree in his heart and to manifest in his life the power of the Preacher's words, the days of advancing age will not be regarded as evil. It will still be true that infirmities will be felt, and natural pleasures will fail, but this will not be esteemed as a loss, for the spiritual things of the kingdom of God, which have occupied his mind in youth and manhood, are still his chief joy. Though he may rise up startled at the voice of the bird, and may feel the grasshopper to be a burden, and the keepers of his tabernacle to tremble, and may see the almond tree flourishing, and realize that he is very soon going to his long home, yet he will not feel that he is going away from things of value, for he feels the tokens of God's love in his soul, and that has long been the one thing of real value to him. That love sometimes, even now, makes him return to the days of his youth, so that his flesh is fresher than a child's.

August 7, 1906.

FRAGMENTS

"Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?"—1 Cor. iii. 5.

The preacher does not cause one to believe. Paul prayed that the saints might know that it is the same mighty power of God which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead that caused them

to believe. (Eph. i. 19, 20.) No one can believe a thing without evidence, or what he thinks is evidence. Now faith is the evidence of things not seen, and that is given to every subject of grace. It is the fruit of the Spirit, and "if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." When Paul or any other minister comes preaching the gospel of God's grace, proclaiming the unsearchable riches of Christ, those who have been born again, who are subjects of grace, believe that truth which they never heard before, because they have faith, which is the evidence within them. "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself."—1 John v. 10. Cornelius believed those things which Peter preached and testified, because he had experienced them, and had in his own soul the substance of those things hoped for, the evidence of those things not seen by mortal eye. As soon as he heard those good tidings of salvation by grace through Jesus Christ he believed them at once; he needed no argument, no proof to the natural understanding; he knew the truth, which he had never heard until Peter told it to him, because he had the witness within.

If the preaching of the gospel caused the belief, then all who heard it would believe; but only those believe to whom the Lord has given the substance of what is preached in their own experience. Now faith is that substance, and therefore it is the evidence upon which belief is founded. As soon as the truth which has been experienced is heard it is believed at once. Some errors are so much like truth in appearance that the hearer will be in a quandary, and will study and argue and consider whether what he hears is truth, but when the true and certain sound is heard he does not stop to question, but feels at once assured in his soul. It is like listening for the sound of one's own bell; he will hear one and another with an, Is that it? but when his own is sounded he does not inquire, but says at once, That is it. The minister who first brings the truth to our ear is the one by whom we believe, but he had no power to cause our belief; that must be even as God has given to every man. The minister may have the tongue of an angel, but he cannot cause belief in the mind of any but those unto whom God has given in themselves the substance, evidence and power. Unto you it is given to believe on him. (Phil. i. 29.)

I HAVE just read this sentence: "God has promised to bless his people when they obey him." My own experience concerning this subject is that the Lord's blessing causes the obedience, and so I think every child of God feels to thank the Lord that he has obeyed the sweet commands of Jesus. He does not feel that he is entitled to the credit and praise of it, but humbly thanks the Lord that he has been given the spirit of obedience. He does not say, I went in paths of righteousness, but, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." We must have grace in order to serve God acceptably. It is not grace because of our good works, but good works be-

cause of grace; it is not the blessing of the Lord because of our obedience, but obedience because of the Lord's blessing. The disobedient child of God will feel that he is altogether to blame for his evil walk, and that his punishment is well deserved; but when he is restored, and is walking again in obedience, he will not, cannot claim any of the credit for his return to paths of obedience; he will say with Naomi: "I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty." His going away was all of and by himself, but his coming back was all of and by the Lord.

EVERYTHING that is suitable in the life of a child of God, everything that is desirable to the spiritual mind, and that is becoming the gospel of Christ, is made the subject of exhortations by the apostles. Exhortations, admonitions and reproofs do not imply conditions upon which the favor of God is offered; on the contrary, the love and favor of God are the cause of the exhortations. The exhortations of the apostles are inspired by the Spirit, and they touch the spiritual life, and reach and make manifest the desires of the spiritual mind; they stir up the pure minds of the saints by way of remembrance of those things which are first in our spiritual life, and which are contrary to our carnal minds. "Reproofs of instruction are the way of life," says the wise man; they are for our spiritual health and comfort; they feed the spiritual life. "Feed thy people with thy rod." The smitings of the righteous do not bruise and break, but are an excellent oil.

"AND I will turn mine hand upon the little ones."—Zech. xiii. 7. I do not understand this to mean that when the Lord smites the Shepherd and scatters the sheep that he will protect the little ones from the stroke of justice. The phrase, "turn my hand upon," appears to me rather to imply antagonism, punishment, the execution of judgment. The little ones are a part of the flock; they are all to know the just anger of a holy God on account of sin, the little as well as the great. This is the day of judgment; the Shepherd receives the stroke, and in that stroke that fell upon him all the flock, to the least of the little ones, is included. Justice and judgment are thus executed for and upon every one of them. When Jesus dies the flock all died in him, in a legal and mystical sense. The sheep are all scattered, and left helpless and defenceless, and the Lord's hand is turned, in judgment, upon the little ones, when the Shepherd is stricken down. The condition of the Shepherd shows the condition of the whole flock. This condition of condemnation and death must be experienced in measure by every one of the little ones. But lo, to their glad surprise the Shepherd appears again, risen from the dead, having paid the debt of justice, and now with all power in his hands he gathers the sheep that were scattered, and carries the little ones in his bosom. The hand of the Lord is not turned upon them in anger any more, but is laid upon them in love and tenderness, to cover them in the day of judgment, and to uphold them in the time of trouble.

If this sentence, "*And* I will turn mine hand upon the little ones," had meant in protection from the judgment that fell upon the sheep, then, it appears to me, it would have read, *But* I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. The word "and," to my mind, includes them all in the judgment which turned the hand of the Lord upon the Shepherd and the sheep.

It has been thought by some that the word "chasten" does not mean to punish; that while the Lord chastens his people, and scourges every one whom he loves, yet he does not punish them. But it appears to me that a careful examination will show that the word "chasten" always implies punishment, though the word "punish" does not always mean to chasten. To chasten means to punish for the purpose of reclaiming, correcting, benefiting, purifying. A father chastens his son with a view to his good when he punishes him for a fault, but when the law punishes a criminal with death it cannot be said that the punishment is chastening. The Lord chastens every son whom he receives. These chastenings, or scourgings, or smitings of the righteous, do not break the head, but are an excellent oil. But those who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, cannot properly be said to be chastened. (2 Thess. i. 8, 9.) The words "chasten" and "punish" are given in the dictionaries as synonymous.

The same infinite power which was in the words, "Let there be light," is in the words of Jesus, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

If it is wrong to give to the officers of the government the number of members enrolled in Primitive Baptist churches, then it must be wrong to keep Minutes of associations and print in them the number of members. If anybody asks the membership of any church I am serving, or with which I am acquainted, I have no objection to telling him, and I see no reason why I should refuse to tell an officer of the government, though my natural pride may be humbled because the churches in our State are so few and small.

If David's sin in numbering Israel and Judah signifies that under the gospel dispensation we must not keep a record of the numbers baptized in the fellowship of gospel churches, I think the apostles would have warned us not to do so; but instead of that we are told how many were added to the church on the day of Pentecost. I feel safe in following that example.

What the force and meaning of David's error in numbering Israel and Judah is, I am not sure that I know. We do know that no man can number the whole of spiritual Israel, that stand before the throne, and it would be presumptuous in any man to even suggest a number. When one asked, "Are there few that be saved?" the answer of Jesus

was a loving rebuke for the vain curiosity which prompted the question.

There is a solemn and important lesson in the two records of this wonderful transaction. In 2 Samuel xxiv. 1, we are told that the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them, to say, Go, number Israel and Judah. Even the wicked Joab opposed this, but the king's word prevailed against Joab, and against the captains of the host. In 1 Chronicles xxi. 1, we are told that Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel. Afterward David's heart smote him, and he humbly confessed his wickedness.

With what solemn reverence and awe we read such mysterious things; we see that in all things the Lord's power and purpose will prevail, and that Satan and wicked men can do nothing but what will be controlled by the Lord to the working out of his own eternal purpose of love and mercy. "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

NOVEMBER 6, 1906.

FRAGMENTS

WHERE to begin in writing upon the wonderful work and the wonderful experience of salvation, is sometimes a serious question. We cannot begin with the Lord's purposes and work, because we know nothing of that until we experience it. The rescued lamb, if it could talk, would not begin by talking of the wisdom and power of the shepherd, of his ownership of the lamb and his work in redeeming it, but would begin with its own remembrance of its painful, hungry, helpless condition, and then of its surprised delight in being taken up into the bosom of this wonderful man whom it came afterward to know as its shepherd. We can know nothing of the Sun of Righteousness until his healing beams touch us; we see him only in his own light.

In the case of Joseph's brethren, the beginning of their knowledge of him as having been sent before them to save them, was a famine called for by the Lord upon the land where they dwelt. So the beginning of the knowledge of salvation on the part of the Lord's people is an experience of a famine upon all this world; not a famine of bread and worldly riches, but a famine of righteousness. (Psalms cv.) The mountains and hills of human power and wisdom are made waste, and all the herbs dried up, so that we find nothing growing there any more to feed our souls that are hungering for righteousness. Instead of rivers of salvation, which we had formerly thought of as flowing from the exaltations of worldly and fleshly power and goodness, we see only islands; no water at all, but the opposite, and all the pools of human wisdom and merit, at which we had before satisfied our thirst, dried up. (Isaiah xlii. 15, 16.) Oh, what a terrible thing sin is! and this we are going to learn more and more while we live in this mortal state.

My thoughts are much upon my unworthiness in the sight of a holy God. Unworthiness is too mild and weak a word to express what I feel concerning myself. "Behold, I am vile," said Job, but he was one pronounced perfect by the Lord, therefore we know that this expression, and the one that follows: "I abhor myself," tell only what is experienced by a child of God. When one, however, sees in his own heart and mind what I am seeing in mine, it seems to him very questionable whether such an one can possibly be a child. The feeling of anguish of one in such a condition is unspeakable. He will be thinking that he is one who, like Esau, has sold his birthright; nothing that he can do can restore it to him; or that he is the one who has sinned wilfully, and now there is only a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indigation; or like one who has trampled under foot the Son of God by thoughts and acts of disobedience.

It is true that Esau could not have had a birthright as Isaac's son to sell if he had not been a son, and that his sonship he could not lose, whatever rights he might sell; and so one cannot sell a birthright to the spiritual blessings, privileges and enjoyments of the church of Jesus Christ unless he has been born of God, for none other can have them to sell, and that relationship of a son cannot be sold. This may and probably does save the disobedient child from despair, but it does not take from him the terror of the Lord, nor restore to him the joy of God's salvation. So in the other cases alluded to by the apostle, we know that the one who is convicted in his soul before the Lord of having sinned wilfully, and of having trampled under foot the Son of God, by disobeying his sweet commands, is a child of God. The natural man is not "under the law to Christ," and cannot sin against that law, nor do despite to the Spirit of grace, for he is not "under grace," but is under the law of Moses, and is dead in sin under that law. It is because one is a child, and under grace, and under law to Christ, that disobedience and wilful sinning cast him so terribly into the depths, which close him about "even to the soul," and cause him such fearful suffering. The man who has not been quickened by the Spirit of God does not know that kind of suffering; there are no bands in his death; his strength is firm, he prospers in his worldly religion, and has more than heart can wish. (Psalms lxxiii.)

But while we are shut away from spiritual enjoyment, and feel that the Lord has made our chain heavy very justly, and has shut out our prayer, there is a kind of relief in reading our state and condition of mind in the inspired Scriptures of truth, and in the hope, which cannot entirely lose its power as an anchor of the soul, that deliverance will come to us some time and in the Lord's own good way. The Lord's love and tender care will never leave his erring, wandering, disobedient child, he watches over him, he looks upon the one who says, "I have sinned, and perverted that which was right, and it profited me not; he will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. Lo, all these things worketh God oftentimes with man,

to bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living."—Job xxxiii. 27-30.

I have been thinking of the great goodness of the Lord toward such as I, who have to say:

> "O Lord! how vile am I;
> Unholy and unclean!
> How can I dare to venture nigh,
> With such a load of sin?"

But when I think not only of his wonderful long-suffering and goodness in causing this vile creature to suffer such keen humiliation in order to withdraw him from his purpose, and hide pride from him, keeping back his soul from the pit, and his life from perishing by the sword, but also of his glorious goodness in giving him, when the trial is complete, prevailing faith to see and feel his sins all gone, washed away in the cleansing fountain of Jesus' precious blood, how can I but rejoice and say, "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord," I have by faith a deliverance from the body of this death? More than forty-two years ago my soul rejoiced in this expression of the psalmist: "Oh, how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men! Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man; thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues."—Psalms xxxi. 19, 20. What a sweet rest is here for the poor soul who has been found by the Shepherd, helpless and undone in the mountain of worldly strength and righteousness, lost in the bewildering mazes of worldly vanity, and has been tenderly brought back upon his shoulders and hidden from the world in the secret place of the Most High, where he shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

It is now the seventh day of December, 1906. Forty-two years ago a council met at my former home in Herrick, Bradford Co., Pa., in accordance with the request of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, in Orange Co., N. Y., to consider the question of ordaining me to the gospel ministry. On account of the inability of my father and mother to travel a distance, the meeting was appointed at our home, about two hundred miles from the church of which I was a member. Of the six ministers who constituted the presbytery only one is now living. Elder Gilbert Beebe was the moderator. The examination and a sermon occupied the first day. The ordination services were on the 8th. The weather was pleasant, and there was a very large congregation both days. What my feelings were at the time, a mingling of hopes, doubts, fears, zealous desires, I would like to tell, but cannot. As I look back how short the time seems which would have appeared so long to look forward to at that time. How little I thought I should live forty-two years. Though the time seems so short to look back

to, yet how few of those who were present then are living now; of those who were the council I do not remember of but two now living. Of my father's family and the families of two brothers living near, there were eleven who were members of the church at Vaughan Hill in 1865; only two of these are still on earth: my sister Bessie and myself. What questionings were mine at the time as to whether the Lord had called me to preach, and what questionings have been mine many times since. I was baptized on the second Sunday in June, 1864, by Elder Beebe, in Middletown, N. Y., and from that time I had but one subject to talk about, and that was salvation by grace. It was near the last of August that I was told by the Spirit that I must preach. I had listened to a sermon in which there was no gospel, but error from beginning to end. My desire was to get up in that congregation and tell the people that this that they had heard was not the truth; that if they knew what the text meant it would comfort them. I had been a member there, and would have felt no hesitation in speaking, but the Spirit suffered me not; but in an instant it was made known to me that I must preach. My one desire was (and has been ever since) to go and tell to all the ends of the earth that salvation is of the Lord. I wrote Elder Beebe, and asked him what such feelings meant. He replied that the church had thought I had a call to preach, and was waiting till the Lord should let me know it. Well, sometimes I feel that my work has been of the poorest kind, not worthy to be called preaching, and sometimes it seems to me that it has been a glorious work, and that all the praise belongs to Jesus, the dear Savior, who has at times filled my heart with love to him, and has filled my soul with laughter and my tongue with singing. But oh, the dark nights, the terrible afflictions, the awful desolations of soul that have been mine to experience; they cannot be told. During these years I have traveled much, and spoken often, and met many kinds of people, and experienced many wonderful things. There are many of these experiences and incidents that would be of interest, I know, to the brethren, and I have sometimes thought I would try to tell some of them, and recount some of the circumstances of my travels, and tell of the ministers I have intimately known. I know of only one now who has been ordained a longer time than I. How poor appears my work, and myself. Truly I can say I feel to be the least of all saints, if I am one. But how sweet is the fellowship of the saints to me. If I ever write of these things I hope it will surely be by the direction of the Lord, so that I may write nothing that will hurt the cause of truth or any of the Lord's people.

"Go, STAND and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life." This is what the angel said to the apostles when he had brought them out of prison. "All the words of this life." What a solemn and sweet expression this is! This is the divine life; this is the life that was in the Word, and which is the light of men; this is

the life which Jesus is to his people, and in which they are all one with him. "He that hath the Son, hath life." Our natural life has to do with the things of this world, and the words of this natural life tell of the wisdom and knowledge of this world, and of its interests and activities and pleasures of every kind. All of these shall come to an end with the end of this world; they are all corruptible, defiled, and shall soon fade away. But the words of this divine, holy, spiritual life tell of all that pertains to God and the things of God; they tell of infinite wisdom and knowledge and power, and of love and mercy and grace, and of salvation and all spiritual blessings; they tell of the wonderful love of Jesus, which passeth knowledge, which caused him to die for his people that they might live; they tell of his glorious resurrection and his ascension to the right hand of God; they tell of all the precious things which he hath prepared for them that love him, and of the inheritance unto which he hath begotten us by his resurrection from the dead, which is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. To feel these spiritual things, to know their power and blessedness, is better than all this world can give; and how inexpressibly good and pleasant it is to be given this grace to speak all the words of this life, this holy, pure and infinitely exalted life, and what an unspeakable blessing it is to any one in this world to be favored with power to hear and understand these words, to hunger and thirst for them and the things they tell, and to find that they are spirit and life to us, and are living in our hearts and lives.

JANUARY, 1907.

FRAGMENTS

YOU are afraid you have not the right experience of a child of God because you do not have doubts enough, and have never felt the terrible condemnation that others have. Well, the apostle says that God will supply all your needs, (Phil. iv. 19,) and if you need any more doubts, undoubtedly they will be supplied in the Lord's own time and way. If you had no doubts I hardly think you would have asked me to tell you whether I think you are a child of God or not. There are a great many kinds of affliction through which the Lord's people are tried; a great variety of tribulations through which they enter into the kingdom of heaven. The Lord appoints them all, and they all work effectually for the good of his redeemed and for his own glory. You have had some sense of condemnation, for when you were made to see yourself a sinner before God you had a feeling of great sorrow that you should have lived a life of sin before him who is so good and holy. But you think this was not as terrible a feeling as some have. It is almost an impossible thing to compare oneself with another in this respect, and estimate the difference in the power and strength of the heart's emotions. At the same time that you were shown your true condition before God you were given a feeling of trust in him who doeth all things well, and these words have been precious to you: "And

this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us."—1 John v. 14. You have never been so dark but that you could trust and wait, assured that he would show himself to you again. You are afraid that sounds like boasting, but it is far from boasting. The most joyful times in your life have been when the flesh was utterly crushed by trials and bereavements. Well, instead of being worried by this you have great reason to be thankful that the dear Lord has given you that confiding trust in him, and that sense of his nearness to you in your great afflictions as a very present help in trouble. You could not have had that sacred experience of trust in him if he had not given it to you. He answers the prayers that his Spirit puts in our hearts, but not according to our expectations. "By terrible things in righteousness" he answers us, but he is himself the confidence of those who experience these terrible things; "the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea."—Psalms lxv. 5.

It was a comfort to you to write to me of your strange feeling of trust in the Lord under all your trials and bereavements, and of the doubts that you have because you have not doubts enough, and it was a comfort to me to read what you wrote. You and all the children of God have just the experience the Lord gives you, and that is always the best. It is natural for us to be looking to some others, and comparing our experience and our own gifts with theirs, and we are so apt to think that if we had such an experience as they have we would not doubt. But each one's experience is his own, and he does not really want that of any one else. Our experience is as our life; it is through that that we are taught of Jesus, and come into the knowledge of spiritual things, and through our own troubles we grow in grace. It is in our own tribulation, not in that of some one else, that we rejoice; it is our own tribulation, not that of another, that worketh patience in our own souls, and that brings us to that precious hope which maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us. (Romans v. 3-5.)

Few heard the dying thief say, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." To the most of those who looked on he was merely a criminal who was receiving just punishment; he was merely a thief. But there was only this difference between him and the rest of the crowd: he had acted out the evil propensities of his heart, while the others had not, or if they had acted them out they felt no condemnation for it, and did not know, as he did, that they merited the punishment of death. But the dying thief is not to be regarded as an extreme case of criminality among those who are saved, as though he occupied a lower, more vile and more degraded place among sinners than the most of those who receive salvation. We know that one stood afar off looking on that terrible scene who must have said to himself, I am viler than he, for I denied my Lord with cursing

and swearing, and thus helped to crucify him. And there are times when every redeemed soul, looking into the dark depths of his own heart, is obliged to say of himself what the apostle Peter must have said: I am worse than that thief; I am the chief of sinners. Instead of making the dying thief and Manasseh represent the extremely wicked among sinners, to encourage us to hope for the salvation of those who have given us no evidence while they lived, we rather take them as representing the best, if there be any best, among the redeemed of our God.

"God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants," said Judah, as he and his brethren stood the last time before Joseph. How much there is down in the depths of the heart of the best among men that they look upon with hatred and detestation when the Lord finds it out and forces it upon their view. It does not need that they shall have put it into deeds, or even into words, in order to feel this terrible oppression and hatred of it in the sight of God. They cannot feel free from the sense of guilt because the wickedness, or any part of it, was kept hidden in the heart, but they see God's great mercy manifested in regard to any of that evil that they were restrained from acting out. The covetousness that was kept hidden in the heart, as well as that which was shown in the crimes of the dying thief, the hatred that we have felt, and indulged, in our hearts, as well as that which came red before the world in the murders of Manasseh; they all alike were laid upon the dear Lamb of God, and caused his terrible suffering, crucifixion and death. We are all alike guilty before God, and there is but one way of salvation for all. It is through grace and mercy alone that any are saved. It is the same grace and mercy for each one, the same grace abounding to all. Oh, what wonderful words, grace and mercy and love through our Lord Jesus Christ.

"Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." —Eph. iv. 3. The word "bond" is sometimes incorrectly written in the plural. It is not bonds, but bond. Peace is the one bond in which the Lord's people are held together in this time state, as against all the contrary powers of the flesh that would rend them asunder, as love is, in an absolute and eternal sense, the bond of perfectness. (Col. iii. 14.) To Zion it is said, "I will also make thy officers peace."—Isaiah lx. 17. Peace alone can rule effectually in the church, and no other officers can restore peace among believers. "The peace of God, which passeth all understanding," is amply sufficient to "keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."—Phil. iv. 7. I have known dividing troubles, and very bitter feelings, to disappear at once by the remembrance, or rather the renewal of the blessed experience, of the peace of God, which came to us when the dear Savior appeared as having died for us, and I have never known a good and reliable overcoming of fleshly wounds and troubles and divisions in any other way. "Let the peace of God

rule in your hearts."—Col. iii. 15. This is the effectual ruling of a perfect officer.

All the saints are born of one and the same Spirit, and therefore have "one heart and one soul," and should be of the same mind, and the same judgment. They are all baptized by one Spirit into one body, and it is their highest comfort to walk in this one Spirit, and to constantly endeavor to keep this unity of the Spirit, to turn away from the selfish temptings of the flesh, to deny selfish desires, and seek to know and to follow only the leadings of the Spirit; and when this sweet and holy peace is felt in the heart of each, and manifested as a bond in which all the members are sweetly drawn and held together as one, then it is evident that they all have the one Spirit of Christ, and are keeping the unity of it in that sacred bond, notwithstanding all the natural differences of circumstances and disposition among them, and they then realize what the sweet singer of Israel said: "Behold, how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

February 15, 1907.

FRAGMENTS

"Which all are to perish with the using."—Col. ii. 22. This is a very peculiar expression, and refers only to the ordinances of divine service under the first covenant, in the worldly sanctuary. The first, or legal tabernacle, with all these carnal ordinances imposed on the children of Israel, were only figures for the time then present. Hebrews ix.: They were "patterns of things in the [gospel] heavens." Now a pattern is to indicate the form and character of the reality. This also is true of a figure, a shadow or a type. When the body, or substance, or reality, appears and has thus been proved and established by the pattern or shadow, this is of no more value. When the garment is made, the pattern according to which it was made is thrown aside as of no more use; it has perished with the using. When the body has come, the shadow flees away.

Those who believe in salvation by the works of the law, those who preach Moses, or the things which Moses commanded to the children of Israel, are dealing with patterns and figures and shadows, which have all been used, and have perished with the using. These legal ordinances were only shadows of things to come, but the body is Christ. These ordinances or patterns are dead now, and all the works based upon them are "dead works;" no gospel life in them, and never was. Therefore the apostle says to the churches concerning them: "Touch not; taste not; handle not."

This expression, "which all are to perish with the using," refers only to patterns of spiritual things, which must be used before they can perish. Many patterns of earthly things are destroyed without ever having been used. Not so with these; no legal pattern of a gospel

thing was ever thrown away or destroyed unused; it cannot perish before being used, nor exist as a living thing any longer after the gospel reality has appeared.

How often shall I forgive my brother? The first time my brother sinned against me I felt tender toward him, and sorry for him, and when I told him his wrong he at once confessed it, and I freely forgave him. I was glad I felt tender towards him, and I realized a feeling of thankfulness for my state of mind. I have since thought that some self-exaltation and boasting were mixed with my thankfulness.

His next transgression against me was more aggravating, and I was vexed with my brother and spoke sharply, and was answered in a like spirit. However, he finally acknowledged his sin, and I forgave him. On the occasion of his third trespass I had to ask one or two brethren to meet with us, and talk with him before he could or would see and confess his wrong. Since then he has sinned against me several times, but after more or less of hardness, resistance and denial, he has said, "I repent," and I have forgiven him. It appears strange that so good a brother should transgress so often. I have now forgiven him seven times, and that certainly appears to me to be enough. I think I will ask the Master if anything more is required of me.

How foolish I am! I asked the blessed Master, "How oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times?" Who would have thought that his answer would be as it was? How his loving glance searched my poor, vain heart as he answered: "I say not unto thee, Until seven times; but, Until seventy times seven."

How blindly and selfishly I have been limiting the boundless love of God. How could I be so forgetful as to think of setting bounds to his rich mercy and grace? For if there is true love in my heart it is not my love, but the love of God shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto me; and if I have ever felt the true spirit of forgiveness toward my brother it is the same spirit of mercy which caused the dear Savior to say to me, "Thy sins are forgiven thee."

Now if I had asked the dear Lord, How oft shall I sin against my brother and he forgive me, what answer would I expect? What answer would I want? And suppose I had asked: How often can I expect forgiveness of the Lord? Oh, to think of my multiplied transgressions against a holy God! Sins repeated and repeated; what a heedless, blind, wicked and foolish transgressor I have been against him, in heart and lip and life. Have I any right to ask or expect his forgiveness? And how often would his forgiving mercy be needed? Until seven times? What would that be compared with the number of my transgressions? "They are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me," said the best of men. Seventy times seven would not cover the number. Oh, how glad I have been in many a dark hour of self-loathing and repentance to read this unspeakably sweet sentence: "His mercy endureth forever." This covers the case

and supplies all the needs. How long will mercy endure toward such a sinful creature as I? Not seventy times seven merely, but for ever. So there is no limit to the number of times that I shall forgive my brother. In the most extreme case it is not likely that four hundred and ninety times will be required. But how much oftener than that, in the case of the most obedient child of God, will the boundless stores of God's mercy be called upon for his forgiveness. Oh, how good it is for us that God "is rich in mercy." The whole heavenly choir join in this song of praise: "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens."

Oh, may we never say of any one we believe to be a Christian, "I cannot forgive him." May we be enabled by the rich grace and mercy of God always to pray after this manner: "Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors."

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life." The apostle does not say, Lay hold of eternal life, as though eternal life were to be obtained by laying hold of it. It is a wonder that men of good, natural judgment should not consider that life cannot be obtained by any exertion on the part of one who is destitute of it. Life itself must precede any action; one must possess it before he can even desire it; and yet how many intelligent people speak and act as though eternal life were something whose possession depends upon some action of our own. Life can only be given to any one by the quickening power of God, and that life is only manifested by a birth, and in both of these works the creature is entirely passive. Timothy is addressed by the apostle as one who is a manifest child of God, and already in possession of eternal life. He is directed and exhorted by the apostle with regard to his work as a man of God, and is told whom and what things to avoid, and what things to follow. This involves a warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. On the one hand are various lusts, temptations, errors, which are attractive to the flesh, but which, when followed after by a living soul, bring him into sorrows and drown him in destruction and perdition. (1 Tim. vi. 9.) On the other hand are righteousness, godliness, faith, love, meekness and the like; these are the fruit of the Spirit, and can only be seen and known by faith, which is also the fruit of the Spirit. Faith constantly and persistently presents to us these spiritual things, and claims our careful attention for them; and the carnal mind, with all the desires of the flesh and the wisdom of the world, as constantly and persistently oppose them. Here are the parties to this warfare: faith, eternal life and all spiritual things on one side, and all the pleasures, interests and wisdom of the world on the other.

"Fight the good fight of faith," says the apostle. "What weapons shall I use in this fight?" asks the man of God. "Lay hold on eternal

life," answers the apostle. You have no need to lay hold on carnal weapons, "for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal," but they are spiritual, and are "mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." You have no need to lay hold on any of the things pertaining to this world, its riches, wisdom or pleasures, to help you in this warfare; the things that belong to eternal life are enough; lay hold on them and you will need no other weapon, no other power. This faith by which the battle is named, "the fight of faith," and by which it is fought, and all the spiritual things belonging to it, and the eternal life which alone is laid hold of in fighting, and the holy zeal and spiritual courage and determination which are felt in the fight—all these are out of the sight of the wisdom of this world, hidden from it; neither can the world see the victory in which at times by faith we rejoice. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." But the fight of faith is none the less a good fight, and the victory is none the less sweet and glorious because the world cannot see it. The victory was not with those who stoned Stephen to death, but it was with him when he kneeled down and said, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge," and then "fell asleep."

"The Sun of Righteousness." What a wonderful phrase! What a clear and wonderful figure to show whence and how righteousness comes into this world of ours. It does not come to any one of Adam's race through any work of his, nor by reason of any personal merit of his own. It does not rise up from the earth, but comes down from heaven, as the light comes down from the sun. The sunshine reflected from the bosom of the earth might seem to have its origin there; so good works wrought by a man seem, to the natural mind, to have originated in his soul, and to be justly ascribed to him; but to the spiritual mind this is known to be erroneous; the spirit and power by which these good works were wrought came from above. So a servant of God was inspired to say of all the righteous works he did, "Yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings." This is Jesus, he is the Sun of Righteousness; he has arisen in the gospel heavens, and his righteousness is upon all who fear his name; it heals all their sicknesses, and clothes them gloriously forever. They are clothed with the Sun, they are clothed upon with Jesus, and thus, in their experience, even here at times mortality is swallowed up of life.

When the sky has been clear and the sun shining for a long time the ground becomes hard, so that a grain of wheat dropped upon it would not take root, but would lie like a pebble, as though it had no life, until picked up by one of the fowls of the air. So the heart that has had a long season of rest from trouble is likely to get hard and

cold, so that "the word of the truth of the gospel" will not sink into it and take root, but will lie upon the surface of the mind, with no effect upon the life and conversation, bringing forth no fruit.

To recover the soul from this sad and apparently lifeless condition affliction and tribulation are required. It is through great tribulation that all of the saints must enter into the kingdom of heaven. While in this mortal state, with two natures, the one contrary to the other, the best of the saints cannot endure undisturbed prosperity long at a time. So Hezekiah says of the deepest afflictions, "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." The living soul must be sorely tried from time to time, or he will begin to be exalted and to trust in himself.

The north wind of sorrow and affliction is awakened and caused to blow upon this garden of the Lord, chilling and freezing its powers, and preventing any flow of pleasant thought and feeling. Sometimes we can see in our thoughts and actions some good reason for this feeling of special self-loathing, and this sense of God's anger against sin, and sometimes we can see no especial reason for this, except that we know always that we deserve at any time nothing but rebuke from our God. Then, when the north wind has accomplished the purpose of God, the sweet south wind of the gospel comes and blows softly upon us, thawing and warming our cold hearts, and the gentle rain of the doctrine of our Savior drops upon us and sinks down into the heart to soften it, while the sunshine of God's felt love finishes the preparation of this sacred soil, making it fine and soft, and ready for the reception of that most precious seed, the word of gospel truth. Then gently and sweetly this precious truth sinks down into the tender soil of this humble and contrite heart sending its roots downward through all its broken depths, and bearing fruit upward to the honor and glory of God.

April 3, 1907.

WHY OUGHT CHRIST TO HAVE SUFFERED?

To the two apostles who were on the way to Emmaus Jesus said, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" And the same night, in his interview with his apostles, he said, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day."—Luke xxiv. 46. But why ought he to have suffered? It is enough to set at rest every question to know that it is according to the eternal counsel and purpose of God, and that "thus it is written." This is a sufficient reason why the Just should suffer for the unjust. In his person and character as a man he was holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners. Earthly wisdom cannot see why such a man can be justly devoted to death for any one, and especially for sinful and unjust men; but neither can the wisdom of the natural man understand or receive any of the things of God; they are only discerned by the Spirit of God. (1 Cor. ii.) But

the Lord has been pleased to show to the faith of his people how the claims of eternal justice are regarded and satisfied by the coming of Christ in the likeness of sinful flesh, and in his suffering and death. To this end Christ is presented in three relationships to his people: Shepherd, Husband, Head, in each of which there are claims and responsibilities which figuratively represent the claims of his people upon him, as established and laid upon him by the eternal justice of God, according to his eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world began.

To this mystery of God's will the dear Savior refers when he asks, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" The contemplation of each of these relationships will show us why it behooved Christ to suffer. The name, Christ, which he uses here, intimates the reason. It signifies "anointed," and presents him in connection with his people. It applies more particularly to the relationship of Head and body. "As the body is one, and hath many members, and these members are one body, so also is Christ." Christ is "Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all." The apostle Peter also used this name, Christ, when he said he hath once suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God. He is just not only in his essential character as the mighty God, the everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace, but also as well in his humiliation as the servant, with all the sins of his people upon him, making himself of no reputation in the sight of the holy law of God, and becoming obedient even unto death. Justice required all this, and in this it was the suffering of the just for the unjust.

Take the first of these relationships, the Shepherd and the sheep. This takes us back into the eternity before the world began. "All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."—Isa. liii. 6. When did the people of God go astray? When Adam fell. "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." Upon what principle of justice could the iniquity of these sheep be laid upon Christ? Only because they were his before they went astray in Adam. A flock of sheep have trespassed and are held for the damage. One looks at them and asks, How much is the damage? The reply is, One hundred dollars. I will pay it and take the sheep. Were they yours before they went astray? No. Then the law will not allow you to take them, not if you offered a thousand times the damage. Another says, I will pay the damage and take them. Were they yours before they went astray? Yes, they were mine. Then not only you can, but you must. The law holds you responsible for them. Therefore, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?" They were his before the foundation of the world, and under this figure he presents himself as responsible for their trespass. There can be no right of redemption in any one except the one who owned the person or thing to be redeemed before it needed redemption. Upon the principle of eternal election alone can

there be one sinner of Adam's fallen race redeemed. One who denies the doctrine of election denies the only ground of hope for a poor sinner. If they were not chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, then they can never be holy and without blame before him in love. (Eph. i. 4.)

When Jesus appeared under the law he appeared as the Shepherd of his sheep. He said, "I lay down my life for the sheep." The sword of justice awoke against the Shepherd, and when he was smitten the stroke of justice satisfied the just judgments of God against every one of the sheep, even to the last of the little ones. (Zech. xiii. 7.) And Jesus says that he will seek them all out, and gather them from all the places whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

The relation of husband and wife is another figure used to show why Christ ought to have suffered these things. Adam was made in the image or likeness of Christ; he is the figure or image of him that was to come. "In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them, and blessed them, and called their name Adam in the day when they were created." When the Lord had taken a rib from Adam's side, and had made that rib a woman, and had brought her unto the man, Adam said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." When the tempter came to Eve she was deceived, and transgressed. The man was not deceived, but for the love he had for her he followed her and was with her in the transgression. He must go to her and be with her, for they were one. Then the Lord said, "The man is become as one of us, to know good and evil."

Now the image or figure is fully manifested, and Adam is shown to be the figure of Christ. The church is regarded here and elsewhere in the Scriptures as the bride of Christ, in a mystical and legal sense, before the world began. She fell in Adam; Christ followed her and was made of a woman, made under the law, that he might take her debt upon him and pay it by his death. Adam could not bring his wife back from under the law, but Christ, the heavenly Husband, could. He had power to lay down his life, and power to take it again. This was the washing of regeneration, when he went down into the ocean of death to wash away her sins, she being buried with him by baptism into death, and then coming up from that washing, he is "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." And when it is declared concerning Christ, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," it is also true of all his people who inherit in him the resurrection of the dead, that they are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. (Luke xx. 35, 36.)

The apostle says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present

it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."—Eph. v. 25-27. Thus the relation of Husband and wife shows why Christ ought to have suffered these things and to enter into his glory. He entered into his glory when he ascended up on high, and when his people are brought one by one to see and feel the truth of salvation by grace, they behold his glory. (John xvii. 24.)

This unity of Christ and the church is more perfectly illustrated in one particular, by the figure of Head and body. The apostle says to the Ephesian church that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, gave Christ "to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."—Eph. i. 22, 23. And to the Colossians he says, "And he is the head of the body, the church."

This wonderful figure seems intended to show how, according to the principles of eternal justice, the iniquities of his people could be and were laid upon him. It is necessary, in order to show this particular kind of responsibility of Christ for the sins of the church which brought them under condemnation and death, to consider that he must have been regarded in this relationship to them as Head and body before the world began. Therefore the Spirit of Christ in the psalmist says, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there were none of them."—Psalms cxxxix. 15, 16.

This shows that he and his body must be one in death. Therefore the apostle says: "We thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead."—2 Cor. v. 14. That is, if he died for them in such a way as to atone for their sins, he must have died in such a relationship to them in a legal and mystical sense, that when he died the law regarded them as having died in him. So the apostle says again, "If we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him."—Rom. vi. 8. And again, "We are buried with him by baptism into death." Then it follows that we are raised up together with him. In many ways the apostles dwell upon this figure of the Head and body, as showing how the death of Christ satisfies the law for all of his people, who were chosen "in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love," and as showing how they are quickened together with him and raised up together. Because of this oneness of Head and body, this eternal, vital unity, he is to all his people the resurrection and the life. They all inherit in him the resurrection of the dead, and "are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." The apostle says, "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." This wonderfully close relationship, or oneness, shows why Christ ought to have suffered these things,

and to enter into his glory; why it behooved him to suffer thus, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name.

When the fullness of this glorious and precious truth is experienced by us, then we are one with him, as he is one with the Father. He is our life, and when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then we shall appear with him in glory.

April 12, 1907.

FRAGMENTS

It is not by the natural voice or by a musical instrument, nor to the natural ear, that melody is made unto the Lord in this gospel day, but in the heart. It is not necessarily true worship when we are making or listening to natural strains of music, but it is when we are feeling the sentiment and power of gospel truth in the heart.

"Sweet is the work, my God, my King,
To praise thy name, give thanks and sing;
To show thy love by morning light,
And talk of all thy truth at night."

"Speaking to yourselves," says the apostle, "in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord."—Eph. v. 19. Under the former dispensations the forms of worship were strictly natural, and the natural man and the child of God could unite in that worship. There was nothing in it to distinguish them from each other. But in the gospel dispensation, "They that worship him [the Lord] must worship him in spirit and in truth." This cannot be done by merely playing upon a musical instrument, or by listening to natural strains of music. The apostle speaks to the true spiritual experience when he says: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."—Col. iii. 16. True spiritual worship was never by outward forms alone, and spiritual praise was never by merely playing upon the harp. The faith of the Son of God was always necessary, and that alone distinguished between the merely formal and the true spiritual worshiper. The true worship must always be in the spirit; the melody must be in the soul. "Things without life, giving sound," cannot tell the truth of God's salvation, nor distinguish truth from error, nor can even the sweet sounds of the most melodious voice. Two may sit side by side and listen to the same sounds of harp or voice and be equally charmed by the melody, though only one of them knows or cares for the things of God, and the one who does not know the truth may be the most delighted with the music. It is undoubtedly to enforce this truth upon the minds of the saints that the apostle uses this striking form of expression, exhorting them to speak with each other in psalms and spiritual songs, that they should not place an undue estimate upon the nat-

ural sounds of music, but should remember that the true melody is not made with hands or voice, but is made and finished in the heart.

Not only the trumpet which Moses was commanded to make, to be used on certain specified occasions (Numbers x. 1-10,) but all the instruments of music mentioned anywhere in the Scriptures, have a spiritual significance. We have that spiritual significance of these musical instruments in this gospel day, but not the instruments themselves, for they cannot make spiritual melody; that melody must be in the heart. The great trumpet is blown in this gospel day, as Isaiah declared it should be, and they come who were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and they do now "worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." But no natural eye sees that trumpet, and no natural ear hears its joy-inspiring sound, nor have those blessed gospel realities which God hath prepared for them that love him ever entered into the natural heart. The natural man does not receive them, for they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual melody and beauty are only heard and seen and felt in the new heart. I may be deprived of my natural hearing and sight, unable to sing or to hear singing, but I am not thereby deprived of the power and privilege of worship, for in this gospel day the melody unto the Lord is made in the heart. True gospel music is not for the purpose of stirring the heart, but because the heart is stirred up. It is not a cause, but an effect; it is the effect of an experience of Christ in the soul; it is he that sings in us. "In the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee." If instruments of music are to be used in the worship of God in this gospel dispensation we shall find it clearly so directed in the Acts and epistles of the apostles.

"We all do fade as a leaf."—Isaiah lxiv. 6. If the leaves of a tree have a vital attachment to the tree they will surely fade. If they are artificial leaves they will remain as good and beautiful as ever when all that were real are gone. If there is divine life in a man he will fade as a leaf. There must be divine life in the soul before one can begin to see and feel the vanity and sinfulness of this natural life, and so begin to fade. Then he will try to keep the old strength and paint the leaf over to keep the natural beauty and freshness, but in vain. In the end his iniquities, like the wind, will carry him away, and he will lie as helpless and undone as a withered leaf in the dust. The natural man does not realize any such fading as a leaf; his strength is firm; (Psalms lxxiii.,) he remains satisfied with this natural life and the things that belong to it; he feels that his own works of righteousness are sufficient to keep him in the favor of God; his iniquities do not make him feel that he is cast off, and they do not carry him away from his confidence in himself, nor separate him from his love for the riches and pleasures of this world.

THERE is an earthly house of this gospel tabernacle, and there is a spiritual house, a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. In our earthly house we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven. (2 Cor. v. 1.) The earthly house is made with hands, and consists in the work of our hands in attending to the order and ordinances of the visible church. These are "the things that are seen;" but the deep spiritual signification and power of these visible works are "the things that are not seen." Moses refers to the work of the Lord's people under the law when he says in his prayer (Psalms xc. 17,) "And establish thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish thou it." By this he expressed the desire of the quickened soul that the true spiritual meaning and power of those legal works might be fulfilled in their experience, as was done in the gospel. So now it is the desire of the Lord's people that they may realize in their souls the true spiritual significance and power of gospel ordinances which are attended to in the church of God openly in the sight of men, such as preaching and hearing the word of the truth of the gospel, attending to the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's supper. To feel the spiritual meaning and blessed power of these outward works is to "be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven."

THE infinite necessity and value of grace and mercy must be known by every one in the family of God, and they can only be known by experience. We try, and it is a noble ambition, to build ourselves up in our own esteem upon our virtues, and upon our exemption from meannesses and vice. But every living soul sees some certain thing in his past life which is constantly in his way, constantly interfering with his self-love or self-respect; some act not strictly honest, some evil word or base thought; and as the apostle said, I am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God, so we have to say, or feel in the privacy of our own hearts: I am not worthy to be called a Christian, because of such and such a thing which I did, or said, or thought.

Sometimes the forgiven sins sink out of our sight for awhile, for when once forgiven they no more rise to condemn us (though they continue to remind us of how vile and base our nature is), and we begin to grow in self-esteem and to be glad and proud of our goodness, when something which we had counted a valuable asset in our store of good qualities, for which we had given ourselves many satisfactory and comfortable nods of approval, all at once puts on another appearance, which startles us out of our self-complacency; a new light seems to be shining upon the supposed virtue, and we see it as something to be hated and scorned, and for which we can but hate ourselves, yea, our own life also; and so there is nothing in us that is worthy of our admiration, when the true light is shining upon us,

nothing to build us up in self. In us, that is, in our flesh, we are never, when in our right, spiritual mind, going to find any good thing. The best qualities of our vile nature, the best things we can see in our corrupt hearts, when set in the light of God's countenance will appear what they truly are, altogether vile. Our secret sins (secret from our own eyes) will some time be set in that most searching light, so that we shall abhor what we admired before. No, we must find, we shall find, that we can be nothing but poor, vile sinners, dependent entirely upon the great grace and rich mercy of God for acceptance with him. We must come down to this, to be poor sinners, in order to come up through mercy and grace to the favor of God. That is all the goodness we can ever hope to have before the Lord or in our own sight. And when the Lord by his abounding mercy and grace makes us walk honestly before him and in the sight of men, our thanks are all due to him. Thanks to the Lord, there is a goodness for us. The Lord has prepared of his goodness for the poor. That goodness he has laid up for them that fear him and that trust in him before the sons of men. (Psalms xxxi. 19.)

NOVEMBER 26, 1907.

THEY SHALL NOT HURT NOR DESTROY

(Isaiah xi. 6-9; lxv. 29.)

The natural disposition of the four wild beasts and the two serpents presented in this wonderful figure, is to hurt and destroy the four domestic animals and the little child spoken of in connection with them. In nature the contrast between the animals here placed in pairs is very striking, the one of each pair being ferocious and destructive, while the other is mild, peaceful and defenseless. But here each of the wild beasts is placed in an attitude and position contrary to that which it would naturally assume, and in which its ferocious disposition does not appear. This natural disposition, however, does not appear as changed or eradicated, but as brought into subjection and held under powerful control. So the lion is eating straw like the ox, the wolf is dwelling with the lamb, the leopard lies down with the kid, the cow and the bear are feeding, and the sucking child is safely and fearlessly playing with the most deadly of serpents.

It is not in nature that this miracle is seen, not in any earthly place, but in God's holy mountain, the church of our Lord Jesus Christ. Here are seen two contrary and antagonistic principles, the flesh and the Spirit, brought together in one person, in the experience of grace, and held under the control of that Spirit of Christ which is represented by the little child.

The coming and kingdom of Jesus Christ is presented by the prophet Isaiah in each of the places referred to above, and this figure is employed by the Spirit to show the effect of gospel power in the church of the living God. I do not regard this figure as showing something that is hereafter to be seen upon this earth among the

nations of men, but as something that belongs to the work of grace, and is seen and felt in the gospel church and in the experience of every child of God.

These wild beasts do not represent natural men tamed, but natural principles, passions and propensities belonging to the flesh of a child of God. In our natural birth the life of Adam is manifested in us, with all the qualities and powers created in him, which are now depraved and vile. In our spiritual birth there is manifested in the same person the life of Jesus, with all its holy and sinless principles and perfections. This new birth, manifesting a new life from above, does not change the sinful nature of the Adamic life, but brings it into subjection. Now are seen and felt in the one person of the Christian the two lives, two principles, flesh and Spirit, the result of two births, "and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. v. 17. This spiritual birth causes a great change to be experienced in the heart and life of a poor sinner, but not a change of the Adamic nature, as he soon discovers to his sorrow. A birth does not change the nature of anything, but greatly changes the circumstances.

If these animals, coupled together in this peculiar figure, are intended to represent the opposing principles of the human and the divine nature in the Christian, how well and appropriately is the contrast arranged. The lion and the ox, the bear and the cow, the leopard and the kid, the wolf and the lamb, the asp and the sucking child. Here we may see the graces of the Spirit, as faith, affection, meekness, love, peace and the like, and over against each one is represented that natural power, passion or propensity which is most directly opposed to that spiritual grace, and most likely to hurt and destroy it. So the lion may well represent the natural intellect, the carnal mind. It is lordly, proud, self-confident, domineering, and has controlling power in natural things, but it "is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Opposed to that towering intellect is faith, which is the only power that can see and receive and understand spiritual things. They stand contrasted with each other, as the lion and the ox. The ox is patient, steady, reliable. Without faith it is impossible to please God, for faith sees the things of God, and by faith we walk, and not by sight.

Now the ox has no power over the lion, but the Spirit, the little child, has controlling power, and in God's holy mountain, in the church of God, the mind is brought under control by the Spirit, and is made to employ its powers, as a servant, in the work that will be to the benefit of the Lord's people. So, as the lion eats straw like the ox, the natural powers of the mind, when controlled by the Spirit, are employed in things that are for our good. Its learning and knowledge are used in reading, in writing, as holy men of old did, moved by the Holy Ghost, in attending to the things that pertain to external forms of worship. In these things the controlling power is mani-

fested through faith. The ox does not do things like the lion, but the lion eats straw like the ox. But the lion is a lion still, and when in any degree released from the controlling power of the Spirit in that holy mountain it will tear and devour. The mind that was employed in reading the Bible, speaking of experimental things, singing hymns to God's praise, will, if controlled by the flesh, be engaged in profane and unwholesome literature, and in worldly and even vile enterprises. Thus living after the flesh we die, in the sense meant by the apostle; but neither faith nor any other grace of the Spirit shall be finally hurt or destroyed. Even Peter's faith did not fail, though he appeared to be at the borders of death and destruction. He yielded much to his strong, determined mind, but the little child had still the controlling power. Sometimes the intellectual power seems to prevail, and we are proud to see so fine and powerful a creature as the lion engaged in the things of the kingdom of Christ, and feel that the brighter mind and the superior learning do have more influence and success in religious work. Then we are suddenly brought to see that we seem to be coming down from the beautiful eminence of God's holy mountain, and are being drifted to a fancied exaltation of our own, and the lion is not seen beside the unmoved, patient ox, but is "seeking whom he may devour."

How good it is of the Lord that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."—2 Cor. x. 4, 5. We cannot trust our own minds, we need the constant presence of the little child to lead us. Our own minds would lead us soon away from the things of faith, and then we cease to walk in the path of holiness, for we walk in that path only by faith, not by sight. How constantly we feel our need to call upon the Lord to lead us "in the paths of righteousness."

Sometimes we seem unable to distinguish between natural and spiritual affection, though there is as much difference as between the cow and the bear. When feeding together we might be well satisfied with them; but one is altogether a selfish principle. True spiritual affection, brotherly kindness and motherly care may be represented by the cow. They are unselfish. These affections are to be set upon things above.

I do not understand the leopard, the wolf, the asp and other animals to represent some specially vile and terrible passion or evil propensity that may spring up in our hearts suddenly, as fierce intruders which do not really belong there, and which we ought to, and can, drive out and destroy, but I regard them as representing all the principles and characteristics of the flesh, in which, Paul says, dwelleth no good thing. "The heart is deceitful above all things;" it is as a cage of unclean birds; it is a waste howling wilderness;

nothing good dwells there, but howling beasts of prey and deadly serpents. To the wise of this world such statements appear the height of foolishness, but the exercised people of God know that the representation is none too strong. All the really good things that are in any man are from the Spirit; they are the fruit of the Spirit, as "love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." When we consider the terrible list of the works of the flesh given by the apostle, we wonder how one spiritual grace can remain unhurt and not destroyed, and how hope can be left alive. But here is where we see the manifestation of spiritual power, "the power of God unto salvation." Power can only be manifested by an opposing force. We could see no power in the wind if we did not see the grass wave and the tree fall before it, or feel its force against ourselves. The power of God caused peace on earth. The power of Jesus was seen in the falling of the wind and the waves before his word. How can there be peace in the heart of a sinner when such opposing principles are there as are represented by these different animals mentioned by the prophet? Only by the power of the Spirit bringing the natural powers under control. And, still more wonderful, when the lion or the leopard or the asp appear to us to have broken away from under control, and to have done their destructive work, so that we feel that love and peace and spiritual joy are dead in our hearts forever, to find ourselves again melted down in thankfulness and love before the Lord, and to find that all those things which the kid and the lamb and the weaned child mean to us are still there in our poor hearts. This is because the decree has gone forth that they shall not hurt nor destroy in all God's holy mountain.

We shall die if we live after the flesh; if we sow to the flesh we shall of the flesh reap corruption; if we do despite to the Spirit of grace we shall have sore punishment (Heb. x. 29,) but the fruit of the Spirit, though its manifestation cease for the time, shall not be hurt nor destroyed.

We feel sometimes the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit so fierce that we wonder we still live; but today we have to acknowledge that the same hope is ours which was given so long ago, and although we still see evil and vileness in us, that is, in our flesh, yet we have to acknowledge that we are favored at times to enjoy sweet peace and confidence in our souls. Why is this? Because these graces of the Spirit cannot be hurt nor destroyed; they are altogether spiritual, but it is through the flesh they must be manifested.

The little child leads not only the ox and the lamb, but the wild beasts also, when we are in God's holy mountain; that is, the whole man is led. Not only is the spiritual mind led to desire to dwell in the Lord's house, but the natural mind is made to yield to that desire, and the feet are turned toward the place of meeting. It is as men, as having the two contrary natures, flesh and Spirit, that we are led, and desire to be led, by the Spirit of God. Sin is terrible to a child

of God, and he can but groan under "the bondage of corruption;" but it is a comfort to be assured that the spiritual graces once planted within us shall never be hurt nor destroyed, but shall remain till our change comes, when we "shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."—Romans viii. 21.

"For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." This cannot mean the literal earth, nor the nations of people upon it. The language and the figure will not allow of such a thought. Like all gospel truth this is known only in experience. The knowledge of the Lord is life, eternal life. (John xvii. 3.) It is said to fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. This is the new earth which the Lord has created, the people of Jerusalem. (Isaiah lxv. 18.) They are new creatures in Christ, but are partakers of flesh and blood, and so are still troubled by a sinful nature. No man can teach them the things of God. It is written in the prophets, "They shall be all taught of God." Just as knowledge concerning natural things comes from the head to every member of the body, so the knowledge of the things of God comes from Jesus, the Head, to every member of his body. The knowledge in each case is life. This knowledge of God, which is eternal life, fills the earth as the waters cover the sea. All the dark depths of the sea and its fearful gulfs are covered and hidden from our sight by the water; so when the Lord is pleased to give us to feel the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, the power and blessedness of that eternal life-knowledge so fills these earthen vessels, this new earth, that we lose sight for the time of the great depths and gulfs of evil and sin in our depraved nature, and to see Jesus only as our life and our righteousness, our song and our salvation.

DECEMBER 4, 1907.

GIDEON

When the Lord told Gideon that by his hand he would save Israel, Gideon must have a sign, for surely the thing appeared impossible. He thought he could propose a sign that would satisfy him, so he asked that dew should be on the fleece which he would put in the floor, and all the ground be dry. It was so, but he was mistaken; doubts were still in his mind. So he said, Let me prove thee this once; "Let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew. And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground."

It does not appear that Gideon expressed any further doubt, or a need of more signs. Three most wonderful signs had now been given him of his own choosing, but as the Lord reduces his army, sending back twenty-two thousand who are afraid, and then nine thousand and seven hundred more, retaining only three hundred who have a peculiar way of drinking water, it is evident that there is still doubt

in his mind, and that he fears to go down to fight that great host with only three hundred unarmed men. Only by faith could he possibly believe that he could thus overcome that countless multitude.

When a sinful man sees the terrible array of enemies within him; when the multitude of his sinful thoughts and words and acts rise up against him, it seems he cannot believe any promise in his favor; a successful warfare against these terrible enemies appears impossible. Gideon did not know what sign or proof he really needed, nor does the poor sinner know what will bring sweet assurance into his soul and cause him to believe, but the Lord does; the word of power must come from him. Thomas did not know what was needed to make him believe that Jesus was risen from the dead, but when Jesus called him by name then he knew.

The Lord sent Gideon down to the host, and there in the midst of his enemies, that lay along the valley like grasshoppers for multitude, he was to hear from one of them, through a dream, the very thing which the Lord had already told him he would do. "A man that told a dream to his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along. And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host." Thus the Lord gave the dream and its interpretation, and Gideon feared no more; his hands were now strengthened, as the Lord had told him they should be. But what a wonderful figure. A cake of barley bread to represent a victorious sword; so small, and yet to smite and overturn a tent. And it was not sent, to human appearance, but came tumbling, as though without purpose or aim; but it was bread, a sustainer of life. The power by which we live and overcome is bread; it is only a cake, and of the commonest kind of bread, but it is the sword of Gideon. "I am the bread of life," said the Savior. "He that eateth me, even he shall live by me." The three hundred represent those to whom the apostle says, "Ye are one bread." That peculiar oneness represented by a loaf of bread is only known and felt by faith.

When the truth and power of God's salvation is made known to a sinner by the Spirit of God, compelling belief, the word of assurance seems to come while we are right in the midst of our enemies; we seem to see them acknowledging their overthrow, as those Midianites in the tent acknowledge their defeat in the hearing of Gideon. Right up out of the darkness of our nature comes the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, as God commanded the light to shine out of darkness in the natural creation.

It is only by faith we can see and believe that things impossible with men are possible with God. We have this treasure, "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God," in earthen vessels, that the

excellency of the power may be of God and not of men. Therefore in this wonderful battle the three hundred are so placed and so armed as to represent the power of God alone in salvation. Three companies, three dispensations, so placed that all are looking at Gideon; not looking at the enemy, as in worldly warfare, but at Jesus. "Look on me," said Gideon, and "as I do, so shall ye do." All of the Lord's people throughout all time are looking on Jesus. A very few, as they appear to human view, but seen by faith, a company that no man can number. But they are before the throne, looking unto Jesus, a little cake of barley bread tumbling into a host of ten thousand tents, as in the sight of men, but in the sight of faith a sword which overthrows all the tents of Midian and smites them that they lie along. Armed only with lights in empty pitchers, and a trumpet to sound the victory even before the battle begins. What assurance! The assurance of faith. "And the three companies blew the trumpets, and brake the pitchers, and held the lamps in their left hands, and the trumpets in their right hands to blow withal; and they cried, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon. And they stood every man in his place round about the camp: and all the host ran, and cried, and fled." "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." This good fight of faith still goes on; it is in the hearts of God's people, and out of the sight of the natural man. The earthen vessels must be broken, and then the light shines out and the enemies are overcome, and we see the excellency of the power is of God and not of men. It is only through affliction that we overcome. It is only through great tribulation that we enter into the kingdom. It is only as the sufferings of Christ abound in us that our consolation aboundeth by Christ. It is only through suffering with him that we shall reign with him. It is only as we bear about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus that the life of Jesus is manifested in our mortal flesh.

How wonderful is the love of God in the heart of a poor sinner. How wonderfully is it manifested toward his children here in this world, in emotions of spiritual affection and in thoughts and acts of brotherly kindness toward them. Here is as nearly an experience as can be felt in this world of the fulfillment of that sweet command, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The dear Savior is the only one who ever did or could fulfill any part of the law, and it is only as Christ is manifestly in us the hope of glory that we can experience and manifest this precious brotherly love. Those toward whom we feel that pure and holy love are very near to us, and their interests are ours to such an extent that we in spirit desire their welfare as we desire our own. We would not say a word that would lessen them in the love and esteem of any other. But O how the flesh in us lusts against the Spirit, so that we have to be upon our guard constantly in this respect against our vain, deceitful and malignant carnal mind, that it should not influence us against the current of this spiritual,

brotherly love. We have the law written in the fleshy tables of our hearts by the Spirit of the living God, that we shall do unto others as we would that they should do unto us, and that we should put off the old man with his deeds; that we should put off hatred, and strife, and variance, and wrath, and malice, and all the works of the flesh, and put on loving-kindness, and mercy, and forbear one another in love, and forgive one another, if any have a quarrel against another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven us.

What contrasts are seen in the character and in the circumstances of the experience of different people who are called by grace. Saul of Tarsus, fierce, full of cruel zeal, struck down to the earth in an instant by a great light, and made to cry humbly, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Lydia, a quiet, industrious woman, having her heart opened to attend to the things spoken bv Paul, and immediately asking, as a great favor, the privilege of ministering to the saints; Manasseh, the terribly wicked and bloody king, sent down into a dungeon, there to be heartbroken for his crimes, and to beseech the Lord for mercy; John, the beloved disciple, leaning on Jesus' breast; Jonah sent down to the bottom of the mountains and crying out of the belly of hell unto the Lord, and made to acknowledge that salvation is of the Lord; and the afflicted father, pleading that Jesus will heal his son, and crying, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." These, all so different, and in such different circumstances outwardly, are prepared by the same grace to sing together in glory the same new song, which no man can learn but they that are redeemed from the earth.

"For they are without fault before the throne of God." What a wonder this appears to be to the poor sinner who feels that he is full of faults, and yet has tremblingly rejoiced in a hope through rich and abounding grace. What a contrast is presented to his mind between them, so pure, and himself, so vile and full of evil; and how it almost takes away his hope of ever coming into such a holy company. But the gospel is again preached to him, and his heart is opened to receive it; how blessedly comes again the sweet truth that it is in Christ and not in ourselves that any do stand holy and unblamable before God in love. It is in Jesus and not in ourselves that we, redeemed by his blood from sin and death, are without fault before the throne of God.

February, 1908.

THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS

(Matthew xxv. 31-46.)

Within the past forty-four years I have expressed my thoughts through the "Signs" upon a great variety of scriptural subjects, but do not now remember that I have ever particularly alluded to the

above named subject in writing. I have tried to be very careful in considering any theme not to even appear to contradict any Scripture without full explanation, and not to neglect to notice any Scripture which appears to stand in the way of my view. In writing upon the great and solemn mystery of the resurrection of the dead, which I have done at some length in former years, I have desired to have in view every expression found upon that subject in the inspired Scriptures of truth, and to see that my belief is conformed to each one; as well to Luke xx. 37, 38, where it is declared by our Savior that Moses showed that the dead are raised up, when he called the Lord the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, for God is not the God of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto him, as to 1 Cor. xv. 51, 52, where it is declared that the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. While I have not understood the resurrection of the dead to be a material resurrection, bringing forth to the natural view the form and features and size that were seen by weeping friends in the hour and article of death, for Jesus alone has come forth from the tomb without having seen change by corruption, yet I have strictly contended that it is our vile body which shall be changed, "that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."—Phil. iii. 21. It is the same body which is sown a natural body that is raised a spiritual body; not raised and changed into a spiritual body, but raised a spiritual body, which can never be seen by natural eyes.

I want to hold fast the form of sound words, which we have heard of Paul and other inspired writers of the New Testament, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus. (2 Tim. i. 13.) I cannot understand how the Lord's work is done, but I want to hold fast and rest in whatever is declared by inspiration. Paul said, "I have hope toward God, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust," therefore I believe it. How it shall be, and what shall be afterward, I do not know. I do not know, nor desire to know, what we shall be, nor how either the elect or nonelect shall appear after the close of this mortal state of existence. Concerning the unjust, as presented in the parable referred to at the head of this article, the dear Savior said, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment," and this, therefore, I believe. The characters concerning whom it was said are definitely described, and this sentence closes up their history and fate. I wish to consider this parable briefly.

First, I will say that I have never seen reason to believe that the punishment of the wicked after death is by physical suffering and torment. I have not regarded the lake of fire, the fire and brimstone, the chain and key, the dragon and beasts, and other things of this kind, as literal, any more than I have the pure river flowing from the throne, the tree of life on either side of the river, the street of gold and gates of pearl, and other things connected with and illus-

trating the glorious salvation of God and the infinite joys and blessedness of his redeemed in glory. I have regarded those terrible things as presenting the awful wickedness of men and nations, and the stern judgments which God has visited upon them and will visit upon them here and hereafter. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus I have always thought the rich man represented the self-righteous Jew, and the poor man the quickened Gentiles. When the apostle Paul says to the believing Gentiles, "Ye are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise," I understand him to be one of the angels who carry Lazarus into Abraham's bosom, into the Abrahamic covenant. Abraham's bosom is not heaven.

In considering the parable of the sheep and the goats we first think of the time of the Son of man's coming. Some regard this coming as at the end of time, and others think it is the coming of Christ in his gospel kingdom on the day of Pentecost and during the gospel dispensation. This difference will not affect the subject I have particularly on my mind, which is the sentence pronounced and executed upon the wicked. This is the same at whatever period it is pronounced.

"Unto them that look for him [and to no others] shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." This is that final coming of the dear Savior which the saints now, and in all gospel ages, are "looking for and hasting unto." It is that glorious appearing which every living soul longs for, when we shall "appear with him in glory." It is that appearing which shall at once conform every believer, every living soul, to his glorious image. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him."

When Jesus ascended and was received out of the sight of his disciples, "he sat on the right hand of God," "on the right hand of power," "on the right hand of the throne of the majesty in the heavens." He is now, during all the gospel dispensation, reigning as King in Zion. In a sense all his holy angels are with him. As Moses and Elias appeared with him in glory on the mount, showing the law and the prophets to be with him, speaking of his sufferings "which he should accomplish at Jerusalem," and also of his glory, so now all the holy men of old, all his ministers and messengers, are with him and declare his kingdom and glory. They did not know when they wrote of him the manner or time of his coming, but now they speak plainly, and the mystery hid from them in the past ages is now made manifest to the saints, and they all, as Abel, being dead, yet are speaking in the church today.

Before his crucifixion Jesus commanded his disciples not to go and preach to the Gentiles, but only to the Jews, for they were the only nation that was before him. But after he was risen from the dead before him were gathered all nations, and he commanded his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, to teach all nations, and he said, "He that believeth and is baptized,

shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." So the Son of man, who "is the power of God, and the wisdom of God," and who reigns in glory, "shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats." Thus the gospel has a dividing power, and the separation is ever going on during the dispensation of the gospel of God's grace. It is Jesus, the King, who does the separating by the word of his power. No change is made in the character of any one of the infinite number that are before him; they are each, those on the right hand and those on the left, the same before as after they are separated. It is to be remarked with wonder and admiration that in this parable, in which his people are to be distinctly manifested, Jesus has named two animals which appear in some manner alike, and yet which must always remain absolutely and forever distinct from each other; they cannot be crossed. To some Jesus said, "Ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep."

The King speaks first to those on his right hand, whom he himself has placed there. No one can tell where the King's right hand is until the King tells him. The sons of Zebedee did not know what they asked when they requested to be allowed to sit the one on his right and the other on his left in his kingdom. He told them that this was not his to give, but it shall be for those for whom it is prepared by the Father. These things, like many of the things in the Bible, are figurative. The right hand signifies favor and power, and the left hand disfavor. Those on the right hand have a kingdom prepared for them before the foundation of the world, and now they inherit it. Nothing they do or do not do can prevent them from inheriting that kingdom. Those on the left hand go into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. To those on the right hand the King says, "Come, ye blessed of my Father." He thus tells them who they are, and where, and why. None of the blessed know that they are in the King's favor till he tells them. They know how they feel toward him and his, but not how he feels toward them. This love in their hearts toward him and the things that belong to him, has been their chief, their only joy. Now he calls forth into manifestation the sweet spirit of love within them, and thus distinguishes them from those who are called "Cursed." There is a "Come" for them in the gospel, which is to them "the power of God unto salvation," and they love the joyful sound; while to those on the left hand there is in it a repelling power, a "Depart." It is hateful to them. To the sheep, the chosen, the words of Jesus are as silken cords of love drawing them to him. He thus "calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out." "I have loved thee," he says, "with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." He tells them of their good works to him, and they are astonished, for they can recall to mind nothing good that they have ever done. Then he tells them of his sweet love and tender care that have been in their hearts toward his little ones, and gives them to understand

that this sweet heartwork is the true and only good work, and that they who love his little ones are near and dear to him. They are not chosen and blessed because of this love in their hearts, but they have this love because of the choice and blessing of God. This that they felt of nearness and love to the lambs of Jesus is the only reliable evidence that they have been placed at the King's right hand, and to them his word is never "Depart," but always and forever "Come."

To them on the left hand the King shall say, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." How well for James and John that their selfish desires were not granted. How well for us all that our own will is overruled and our selfish wishes denied. Well may we ever be thankful to the God of all grace for the will and power to say, "Not my will, but thine, O Lord, be done." Those on the left hand said, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee?" When did we ever fail to do our duty? If they had done one of these things to one of his little ones it would have been merely as a duty, which would have destroyed all goodness in the work. It is love that makes the work good. Love is the fulfilling of the law. The Pharisee prayed in the same spirit of self-exaltation, seeing no reason why he should not be commended and rewarded. Jesus said of them, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal." It will be noticed that the words "everlasting" and "eternal" are from the same word in the original Greek. The punishment of the one and the eternal life of the other are of the same duration. This is always too much for my weak mind to contemplate. Everlasting punishment! I know in my own experience the truth of Paul's declaration that "the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." I see this opposition in my own flesh to the doctrine of election and predestination; but, thanks be to the Lord's most holy name, I know that he has given me faith to receive unquestioningly his word and doctrine, and to rejoice in the truth, and to rest blessedly at times in his most holy will, and to say with the dear Savior, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."

The apostle says of the same characters as those on the left hand, who know not God and obey not the voice of our Lord Jesus Christ, that they shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints and to be admired in all them that believe. (2 Thess. i. 9, 10.) The words "punish" and "punishment" prevent the thought of annihilation.

The Lord has redeemed his people from sin and all its direful consequences, for which they shall always praise his matchless name. Why he has left any in that terrible death which came upon all men the day that Adam sinned, we can never know, except that such was

his infinitely wise and holy will. If we ask, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" we are simply asked, "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God?"

Neither in the resurrection of the just nor of the unjust do I understand a physical appearance of the mortal body to human sight, nor in the everlasting punishment of the one, or the eternal life and blessedness of the other, do I understand a physical suffering of pain or an enjoyment of carnal delight. But the infinitely terrible reality of the one, and the solemn and glorious realization of the other, are infinitely beyond the reach of my understanding. I can only rest in the inspired language of truth. I do not want my natural sympathies to affect my belief in spiritual things; I do not want to hold what is only traditional and natural, and I would not lightly cast aside a doctrine which has been held by the church, without being well assured that such belief is not according to the Scriptures.

I will close with a few clear and definite and truthful expressions of a dear sister:

"I cannot see how any one who has felt the plague of his own heart can imagine any punishment too great for the infraction of God's holy law. A full view of that holiness and of our own iniquity most surely drives away such a thought as that. For my own part I have never had any doubt but that I fully understood the psalmist's language when he said, 'The pains of hell gat hold upon me,' and I have never questioned that there is a hell, since I have tasted it. There is no need of any second sentence, 'In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.' Execution of that sentence was not delayed an hour. The whole human race were then in death, a state of separation from God, and all have ever since remained there, and ever will remain there, except those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. In due time Christ came to save these chosen ones, and 'to redeem us from all iniquity.' His name was called Jesus, for he should 'save his people from their sins.' Our experience of this here in time is all we dare talk about. We believe we have sometimes a foretaste of the joys of heaven, which means union with God, but how soon the natural feelings assert themselves, and we are at home in the body again. We are almost always at home in the body while we remain here. A great mystery covers the world of the hereafter. We die, that is all we know with our natural minds. Faith enables us to believe we shall partake hereafter of God's holiness, and this is our chief desire; but we know nothing as we speak of knowledge concerning other things. Faith does not enter the realm of the non-elect, the unregenerate, the wicked, who 'shall go away into everlasting punishment.' They are in that state today, but the veil of flesh, which prevents our being able to conceive the joys prepared for those who love God, except by revelation, also prevents the prevision of the unregenerate as to the dreadful realities of their future state. No

description of material torment which the ingenuity of man has invented can possibly equal the condition of those eternally separate from God."

April 10, 1908.

FRAGMENTS

Elder R. C. Leachman, of Virginia, once told me of a peculiar dream he had when he was exercised about baptism, and seeking assurance as to which was the true church. Elder Samuel Trott was then serving a few scattered churches of the Primitive order, while popular preachers were preaching to large congregations of the New School. Mr. Leachman liked the preaching of Elder Trott, but the question would often arise in his mind, Could so few be right and so large a number be wrong? One night in a dream he saw large fields of wheat, and men with cradles cutting it down. He admired the large fields and the fine appearance of the wheat standing so erect; but when he took some of the fine appearing heads of wheat in his hand he found no grain, only chaff. Then he looked more particularly at an old man whom he had noticed gathering with an old-fashioned reap-hook or sickle some scattered stalks of wheat in various fields. He observed that the heads of wheat which he was reaping were hanging down, and as he took some of them in his hand he found they were well filled with sound and excellent wheat. When he awoke he had no longer any doubt as to where the true church was. He was soon after baptized by Elder Trott. I was favored to travel some with Brother Leachman, and to hear him preach many times, and I think I never heard a more powerful preacher nor a more eloquent speaker.

The rocks were smitten by Moses to give the children of Israel drink. The first was in Rephidim, about two and a half months after they had departed out of Egypt. (Exodus xvi. 1; xvii. 1-7.) The second was in Kadesh, in the desert of Zin, nearly forty years after that event. The first was before they came to Sinai, and before the Lord's first message was given them from Sinai by Moses, which was in the third month after their departure from Egypt. The second was after the death of Miriam, and but a short time before the death of Aaron (Numbers xx. i. 29,) and of Moses.

In the first instance the Lord stood upon the rock in Horeb, and at his command Moses smote the rock and water came out. The apostle Paul says, They "did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ."—1 Cor. x. 4. The apostle here evidently sets forth the truth that Jesus was with the church in the wilderness, supplying all their needs. I do not think we are to understand the apostle to indicate that the literal rock followed them, nor that the water flowing from that rock literally continued to follow them during all their forty years journey. If this had been the case they would not have thirsted

in Kadesh, and complained again because there was no water there. As the rock was smitten by Moses, so Christ was presented in that figure as smitten by the law, showing the only way of salvation and the only source of supply for those who thirst for the water of life. The smitten Rock is the only way of salvation for those who lived before Christ suffered in the flesh, as well as for those in the gospel dispensation. To show this the rock in Horeb was smitten by Moses at the beginning of the wilderness journey. But Moses does nothing in smiting this first rock to bring upon him the rebuke of the Lord; for his work as a leader is not to stop here, but to continue nearly forty years.

The smiting of the second rock, in Kadesh, is of special import, for something more is to be presented here than was shown in the first rock. The forty years during which the Lord had declared that the children of Israel should wander in the wilderness were nearly expired, and the leadership of Moses must end in such a way as to show the work of the law fulfilled, and the law removed from over them, never to appear against them any more.

"Then came the children of Israel, * * * into the desert of Zin, in the first month: and the people abode in Kadesh, and Miriam died there, and was buried there."—Numbers xx. 1. And there was no water for the congregation, and the people murmured, as they did, and have always done, on every occasion of disappointment, and the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, "Take the rod, and gather thou the assembly together, thou and Aaron, thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give to the congregation and their beasts drink. And Moses took the rod from before the Lord, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock; and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly: and the congregation drank, and their beasts also. And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron, Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them."

The fault of Moses was that he was angered with the people at the waters of strife, so that he spake unadvisedly with his lips, and therefore, the psalmist said, it went ill with him. (Psalms cvi. 32, 33.) He claimed the power for himself and Aaron, instead of ascribing it unto the Lord. He is thus shown to be a sinful man, and from this time he is made to know that he cannot take the people over Jordan. His work is done in having brought them thus far, as the work of the law is finished in bringing the Lord's people to Christ. (Gal. iii. 24.) The rock smitten represents Christ crucified. Its work ends there; it cannot take one over into the gospel land. The work is taken up

here by Joshua, who had not departed out of the tabernacle of Moses while the Lord was talking with him. (Exodus xxxiii. 11.) Joshua represents Jesus, risen from the dead. He was with Moses during the giving of the law and during all the journey through the wilderness.

Moses greatly desired to go over Jordan, but he could not, because he must set forth the law in its power and work and limits. When he urged that he might see "that goodly mountain, and Lebanon," the Lord commanded him to speak no more of this matter. He looked from Pisgah over all the land of Canaan, and he sang of gospel truth. (Deut. xxxii.) Then he died, and the Lord buried him, and no man knoweth where. (Deut. xxxiv. 6.) His eye was not dim at the moment of death, nor his natural force abated. So the law does not grow weak gradually and lose sight and strength gradually, but at the moment of its death its sight is as keen as ever to see the least infraction of the law, to see the least sin, and its strength to bring to justice is as great as ever. The devil disputes with Jesus about the body of Moses—about the law, insisting that it is still in force against the Lord's people, that it is still the rule of the Christian's life, but the answer of Michael, our Prince, is, "The Lord rebuke thee." Those for whom the Rock was smitten, for whom Jesus died, are no more under the law, but under grace. (Rom. vi. 14.) It is not a natural life, lived according to the law given by Moses, written on tables of stone, in which the Lord's people appear before God, acceptably, but a life of faith upon the Son of God. Christ is our life, and when he shall appear, then we shall appear with him in glory.

AUGUST 19, 1908.

DWELLING TOGETHER IN UNITY

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"—Psalms cxxxiii. 1.

How wonderfully precious this sentence is to read; how far more precious it is to feel. It goes down into the deep places of the heart, and makes its power and effect and sweetness to be felt there, and then it goes out to all the ends of the earth and recalls the varied experiences of sorrow, condemnation, affliction and loneliness there felt by those who are now dwelling together in unity. These brethren who have now been gathered together in the name of Jesus, were first scattered to the ends of the earth. They were made to feel their need of salvation, and sought for it by the works and ways of men until they came to the end of all their earthly strength and wisdom and righteousness. Then from the end of the earth they cried unto God, who heard their cry, and made bare his holy Arm in their sight, and caused them to see the salvation of God. (Psalms lxi. 1; Isaiah lii. 10.) What a blessed season it is for these subjects of God's wonderful grace when they first find others of like experience and learn the inexpressible sweetness of gospel love and fellowship. When these "ends of the earth" are first brought together how easy it seems for

them to love one another; how impossible it appears that anything could occur that would cause discord or separation. It seems to the child of grace, when first breathing the fresh and fragrant air of this spiritual morning in this new gospel world, as though there is, and must be always, absolute agreement between all these dear people of God in all things. How startled and grieved, then, must each one be when he finds a difference arising between any of them, and especially when he sees in his own mind opposition arising against something said or done by a dear brother, and perhaps a feeling of anger stirred in his heart. Then comes a sense of opposition and a conflict within himself, against himself, which causes a feeling of astonishment and of self-abhorrence in his own soul. How much each child of God has to learn through suffering before he is prepared to know in any great measure how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. In Adam this unity is not to be found. Although all nations of men that dwell on the face of the whole earth were made of one blood, yet there is not unity either of body or mind among them, but infinite diversity. Unity is only found in the family of God; in Christ, and not in Adam. All of them have been born of the Spirit of God, and are, therefore, "of one heart and of one soul."—Acts iv. 32.

But each one of those who have been born of God has still a fleshly, sinful nature, and soon must experience sadly that that which is born of the flesh is flesh still; that the fleshly nature has not been changed to a spiritual, sinless nature in the new birth, but a new, sinless nature, the divine nature, has been given and is made manifest by contending against the sinful inclinations of the carnal nature, which is "enmity against God." So the apostle says: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."—Gal. v. 17. Now when one has experienced some of these bitter conflicts within himself, and has had some sad conflicts with brethren, and has known the sweetness of forgiving and being forgiven, then he begins to be able to appreciate the goodness and pleasantness of brethren dwelling together in unity. How poorly off we are when alone; how sad and sorrowful we are when separated from those we love in the Lord, but how infinitely more so when at variance and angry with them. We cannot live to ourselves alone; we need our brethren all the time; we need their help in difficulties; we need their sympathy in our trials; we need their daily experience. We are one with them in the living things of the Spirit, and we must have them in our lives as we have them in our hearts. So the apostle says, "I beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."—Eph. iv. 1-3.

In the Spirit we are one. "Baptized by one Spirit into one body." Our spiritual desires are the same. But what a wonderful work this

is, "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Because we differ from each other so greatly in the flesh, what long-suffering is necessary, what self-denial, what forbearance. Because we are one in Spirit we know that every difference must be in the flesh. But how difficult it is to allow that this difference may be in our flesh instead of in that of our brother. It is for us to decide this important thing ourselves, if the decision is that the blame is in our flesh. The grace of meekness and lowliness comes in to help us here. But if the fault is most surely with our brother, then what long-suffering is necessary, and what forbearance. We cannot insist upon the legal standard, "An eye for an eye." We cannot insist upon acknowledgment always, but must wait till the Spirit causes him to see and feel the wrong in himself. Forbearance! We cannot forbear where there is nothing to forbear. Sometimes one will not acknowledge the wrong that he sees in himself. Pride and a stubborn will prevent. But love tells us what to do; we must wait the Lord's time. Forbear one another in love. Love saves the fellowship. Love insists that we wait till the Lord works meekness and tenderness of conscience in him. The bond of love and union grows stronger as we have more of these bitter struggles with our own unruly natures, and more need for the exercise in our own souls of these fruits of the Spirit. Now we are learning how good it is, how valuable, how mutually helpful and serviceable it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, as well as how pleasant, how sweet and full of heavenly comfort and peace.

The psalmist makes a wonderful comparison here in saying that this dwelling of brethren together in unity is like the precious ointment that was poured upon Aaron's head, and went down the skirts of his garments. But this brings to the view of faith the anointing of Jesus with the Spirit of the Lord, by which he was prepared to bring all the infinite blessings of the gospel to the poor. This anointing is as the dew that descends upon the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore. This is the unction from the Holy One by which the saints know all things concerning the spiritual life. It is the anointing which they have received of Jesus Christ, as the apostle John declares: "But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."—John ii. 27. How greatly important it is that every one of this family of God should carefully guard the unity of the Spirit, so far as it can be guarded by human effort. The apostle implies that it can be guarded in a sense, by exhorting the brethren to endeavor to keep it. It is over himself particularly that each one is to watch; it is his own words, and acts, and thoughts, and emotions, that each one is to guard; it is his own self that each one is to prove. Where each one is thus laboring with himself there will

be found but little need for him to labor with any other member of the dear family. While all are in this state of mind this sacred unity is without conscious effort, kept in the bond of peace. This is dwelling together in unity.

Love is said by the apostle to be "the bond of perfectness," and we are told to put it on, and to walk in it. How easy that is, at times. How easy it is to bear and forbear in the case of one we dearly love. How easy it is to forget or deny self when the welfare of a dear child is involved.

The word "good" means all that is valuable, substantial, beneficial and absolutely suitable to our need, while the word "pleasant" means all that is agreeable and gratifying to our purest, most exalted and most sacred desires. For those thus dwelling together nothing more can be wanted for this time state. They shall be abundantly satisfied with the goodness of the Lord's house. The longer we dwell upon the earth, and the more of trials and afflictions we endure, the more highly shall we value and prize this sweet fellowship and unity, and the more ardently shall we endeavor to keep it. The greater also will be our desire, and the more earnest our prayer, that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God. (Eph. iii. 17-19.) Whatever we do, and say, and comprehend, when thus dwelling together in unity, we do and say and comprehend "with all saints." No discord, no division here. In this is realized as fully as can be in this mortal state the fulfillment of the dear Savior's prayer: "That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us."—John xvii. 21. And so, as this mortal life goes on, with the trials and deliverances, the sorrows and joys, which are appointed unto us here upon the earth, the sweeter and more precious to us will be these blessed words of the psalmist: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

October 27, 1908.

FRAGMENTS

Satan tells partial truths, but turns them into lies by not telling all that belongs to them. He tells us of our iniquities, and shows us long, black lists of our sins in thought and word and deed, but he never tells us that Jesus died to atone for sin and to put it away. He insists upon the truth that we are great sinners, but he never intimates that Jesus is a great Savior. If that sweet and blessed truth is in our minds the devil did not put it there; it is there by the power of the Holy Spirit. The enemy tells us of the aboundings of sin, but never alludes to the superaboundings of grace. He does all he can to make us complain of the darkness in our minds, and of doubt because of it, but never suggests that it must be light which reveals

that darkness; much less does he ever even whisper in our souls that this light by which we see our sins is itself divine and eternal life, and that Jesus is our Life, and our Light, and our Salvation. This truth that the mournful knowledge of our sins can only come from Jesus finally overcomes the devil and brings us out from under the power of his lies and temptations. Then we are sweetly forced to exalt the name of Jesus, who came to destroy the works of the devil.

Whosoever will. (Rev. xxii. 17.) The pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, which John saw in vision, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb, represents every blessing which is embraced in the new and everlasting covenant of grace. The throne is the place of power; the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every believer. Only the believer sees, believes and feels this truth. From that throne, or power, flows every gospel blessing. These blessings, including every purpose which God purposed in himself before the world began, may well be represented by a river, as they flow forth richly and sweetly to all the children of God through all the ages of time. The psalmist says, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." The gladness and confidence of the people of God are because God is in the midst of them with all his infinite, loving power. This pure river, flowing from this glorious throne, is ever "full of water;" it can never be lessened; its sweet and blessed waters can never fail or be diminished. Every promise of our God shall be fulfilled, for they are all yea and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God by us, and Jesus is the power of God.

In this city which John saw coming down from God out of heaven there was one street, only one, and that "was pure gold, as it were transparent glass." Whenever and by whomever this gospel city is seen, it is seen coming down. Everything pertaining to the church of God, with every good and perfect gift, is from above, and comes down from God out of heaven. All is from the power of God; the power and works of men have no place here. This one street is the one way in which all the innumerable company of the redeemed walk. Jesus is that way, that street; they all walk in Jesus. He is "the way, and the truth, and the life." The faith by which all of the redeemed walk in him is compared to pure gold, and the trial of that faith is more precious than of gold that perisheth. The tree of life is in the midst of that street, as well as on either side of the river. It is seen and tasted in the old testament as well as in the new. The holy men of old were refreshed by the water of life as well as those in the gospel ages. This river includes all the doctrine of God our Savior, and all of his precious promises, and all of the dear Savior's sweet commands, and all of the ordinances of the gospel, and all of the glorious order of the church of God. Those who are able to see and recognize this river see nothing in it that indicates the works of

man—nothing which flows from any earthly power. Every part of the water that fills that river, and every stream that flows out from it, speak alone of the power of that God from whose throne they proceed. Every such soul has been given spiritual life, and is thirsting for the water of life. Such people do not want to hear of the works of men, for there is nothing in all that man can do that can satisfy their thirst for righteousness, but they want to hear of the perfect works of God. The cry of their souls is, "Let thy work appear unto thy servants." By the Lord's work they are made to rejoice, and their sorrowful souls are replenished.

The natural man does not want the water that flows in this river, because it proceeds from the power of God; he "receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." He wants to hear men's works praised and men's names exalted; he has no will to hear the doctrine that says, "Salvation is of the Lord." Jesus said to the Jews, "Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." The quickened soul wants the pure water of life, the pure doctrine of God, unmixed with man's works; he wants to hear God's name exalted, and his doctrine declared, the pure doctrine, clear as crystal; the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation; election, predestination, the sovereignty of God, salvation by grace, sure to all the chosen people of God. All this blessed truth is the pure and clear water that keeps that river ever full. But those poor souls who love this God-honoring truth always feel unworthy to claim it as theirs; unworthy to take one drop of this pure water of life. They have a will, a strong desire for this gospel truth, but cannot see how it can belong to such unworthy sinners as they feel themselves to be. This inability to take of that sweetly flowing river can never be overcome until Jesus commands them, each for himself, saying, "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." This word, "let," is a word of power, a word of sweet command. By it the Lord commanded the light to shine out of darkness; by the same word of power he shines in the poor sinner's heart, "to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." Now the thirsty soul is free to take each sweet promise, each precious truth, and say, "It is mine." He would have taken it before, but could not. Now the Lord, who worked in him to will, has worked in him to do. From this time he loves to be drinking of this glorious river; from this time his controlling desire is to obey the dear Savior, to work out in his life and conversation that salvation which the Lord has so graciously wrought in him; from this time he desires to "shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light," and who has caused this pure river to flow from his holy throne for the refreshment and comfort of all the people of God.

A CHURCH having peace within herself, and at peace with sister churches! How good and pleasant this is. The minister is without fear of hostile criticism as he preaches the gospel; he has no high estimate of himself as a preacher, but feels that he is greatly insufficient for such an important work, yet he is confident that he has the love and fellowship of his brethren, and is sure that they will always listen to him kindly and with forbearance, where that is needed, and with reverence for his office and gift, as from God, and that when any point of difference may arise there will be felt on their part, as well as on his, a freedom to talk about it with him and among themselves in brotherly love. The brethren regard their minister as a gift from the dear Savior to them, whom they are to remember in a gospel manner, as one who has the rule over them (Heb. xiii. 7, 17,) and he regards them as placed in an especial manner under his care as an overseer, who is to feed them and take the oversight of them. Brethren thus dwelling together in unity are free and cordial with each other, and are inclined to "look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others." They have mutual confidence, and instead of magnifying any differences that may arise among them, they speak cordially and freely of them, considering them prayerfully, without being dictatorial or having any fear of giving or taking offense. They desire to be constantly on the watch, that there shall be no division among them, as each knows that he has a vile, unruly nature, which can only be held in subjection by the Holy Spirit. This old man with his lusts they constantly try to put off, and not let him rule. What brethren need to see in each other is an experience of grace, the felt presence and power of Jesus, a love for the doctrine of salvation by grace, and a sweet belief in the unlimited, boundless power and sovereignty of the God of their salvation. Nothing but a departure from and a denial of these all-important points of truth can justify any inclination toward a division among brethren.

A church or community of brethren not at peace! What a contrast! What a confused and disorderly and uncomfortable state of things! No mutual confidence among them; all watching each other, and watching their preacher with suspicious scrutiny. Some difference, or fancied difference, in some point of doctrine or order has arisen, and has been magnified, and most likely distorted, until they are on the verge of division. The minister feels that duty and faithfulness require that he should have something to say on that point whenever he speaks, and so the difference is accentuated.

Some, perhaps many, are in a fighting mood, but do not know it, feeling that they are actuated by pure zeal for the truth. The point of difference is constantly agitated, and a life of faith is almost lost to their sight. Sometimes, as in the separation of the Old School Baptists from the New School in 1832, the difference is important and clear, and the erroneous party is clearly discernible. But often in such cases there is wrong on both sides, and when a division takes

place it is quite likely to be on personal grounds, and with no really important scriptural point involved. Each party accuses the other of causing divisions, and both feel that their contention is right, and that all the just blame is on the other side. The trouble is often aggravated by unwise visiting brethren, who seek and receive confidences from one and another, and unwisely interfere and take part with one or the other party, instead of leaving them with each other and their Lord, and under the officers which he has given them. "I will also make thy officers peace."—Isaiah lx. 17. This is a doleful state, a sad picture, but not as dark and sad as I have seen in the past forty-five years. I cannot let my pen go farther in this sorrowful line now. I am thankful that I can tell of wonderful and blessed changes which I have been favored to witness through the reigning power of grace in our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the midst of such a dark time of distress in a church, from which our gracious and long-forbearing Lord has not yet removed the candlestick, a dear child tells a sweet experience of grace. All hearts are at once brought under the controlling power of love, and experience a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. One of the songs of Zion is sung, and at once each one of the company is singing and making melody in his heart unto the Lord. Brethren begin speaking with each other and are surprised to find no difference among them. The disputed points are approached, and no one sees anything to dispute; all belong to the one rich and all-comprehensive theme of salvation by grace. There is nothing worthy to disturb the holy quiet that rests upon them, and the fellowship which binds them strongly together. As they talk, and sing, and worship, Jesus is in the midst of them, saying, "Peace be unto you." This peace of God which passeth all understanding is the only officer needed among them now. It is this peace which keeps their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Each one has a feeling of repentance, a feeling to turn away, not from his brother, but from his own former selfish and unkind ways. Each one feels that blame was his, and he is ready to confess his faults to his brethren. Their former troubles make them much more careful and tender toward each other than before, and more fearful of hurting one another and of disturbing the holy quiet of the church of God. Their mutual love seems stronger than ever; they feel it to be "the bond of perfectness," and are glad to be putting it on, as the apostle enjoins them. They are now forbearing one another in love, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven them. They are, as at the first, of one heart and one soul; neither say any of them that aught of the things which he possesses are his own, but they have all things common. There is nothing on earth so beautiful and lovely as this. This is that Zion, "the perfection of beauty," out of which God hath shined. "Behold,

how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

NOVEMBER 23, 1909.

FRAGMENTS

SOMETIMES my whole being appears to me like a desert, dry and hard and desolate, so that I seem to have no power even to think, and if I do think, my thoughts are hard and cold and dark, with no life or power in them. How unpleasant a state of mind this is. But there have been other times when this same mind and heart, this desert, is made to be glad, and this wilderness to rejoice and blossom as the rose. Then how easy it is to think, how sweetly the thoughts reach out with tender interest and love over all the earth, and how joyfully they rise up in adoration and praise to the God of all grace. Then how tender and loving the heart feels toward all men, and especially toward all who love the Lord, and who long for his salvation, and who desire his glory. Can this be the same mind that was before so dark, the same heart that was lately so cold and hard, that is now filled with gladness and comfort? Yes, it is the same. The felt presence and power of Jesus has made all the difference. O that he would remain with me, for when he withdraws his sensible presence I am as dark and dreary as before. Yet is there not some selfish spirit in this desire? Am I not forgetting others who are in affliction and gloom in this desire for my own comfort? Would I not quickly forget the wonderful grace and mercy and goodness which the dear Savior has given me, if he should remain with me all the time? He knows how frail and ignorant I am, and I must be at times left in darkness and affliction in order that I may not forget that Jesus is all my light and life, and that without him I am nothing. I must daily feel the dying of the Lord Jesus in my body, in order that the life of Jesus may be made manifest in my mortal flesh. (2 Cor. iv. 10, 11.) Only thus can I be prepared to comfort others who are in affliction, preaching to them out of my own experience Jesus as the Light and Life and Righteousness of his afflicted and poor people.

"IF A man die, shall he live again?" The wisdom of this world tries in vain to find an affirmative answer to this question of Job. To all the searchings of human wisdom and knowledge from the beginning the answer has always been, and must always be, No. Human philosophy can only see that death is the end, the extinction, of mortal life, and that there is nothing beyond. But by the teaching of the Spirit the faith of the Lord's people receives a knowledge which the eye hath not seen, nor the ear heard, nor which hath entereth into the heart of man. Faith hears the declaration of this Spirit, saying, "If we be dead with him [Christ], we shall also live with him;" and again, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore." "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

It is needless to say that the figure which appeared to John on the isle of Patmos was not the body of Jesus which died and rose again, but was an emblematic presentation of the whole character, work, power, glory and truth concerning Jesus, as he is shown throughout all the Scriptures. He is seen in the midst of the golden candlesticks, the churches, and nowhere else. Jesus speaks to the churches, sings praises to the Father in the midst of the churches, and says, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." The whiteness of his hair signifies that his "goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." He is "the ancient of days." His eyes are as a flame of fire, shining with holy and searching power into the soul. The garment of salvation is upon him, reaching to the foot, covering his whole body, the church, and bound to that body by the girdle of truth. His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace, represent the church of God on earth, which is in the furnace of affliction. He is with them in the fire, walking in them, and they are with him in that eternal life in which they are one with him. His voice is as the sound of many waters; it is the sound of gospel truth spoken by all the nations of the redeemed, by all his people among all nations, kindreds, tribes and tongues under heaven. The stars in his right hand are the ministers of churches, whom he moves and sends forth at his will. The sharp two-edged sword which went out of his mouth, is the word of the Lord, which pierces even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; and in his face is seen all the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, as the sun shineth in his strength.

What was the error of Moses? Not that he struck the rock instead of speaking to it, but that he did speak, and "spake unadvisedly with his lips," saying, Hearken, ye rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock? Thus he exalted himself and Aaron instead of the Lord, and because of that it went ill with them for their sakes. (Psalms cvi. 32, 33.) This was the second time that Moses brought water out of the rock. The first time was nearly forty years before. (Num. xx. 10; Exodus xvii. 6.) From the time that he struck the rock, after Miriam's death, and just before the death of Aaron, it was told him that he could not go over into the promised land. The law struck Jesus and could go no further. It could not take the Lord's people over Jordan into the gospel land, but could only look over and show by type and figure all the greatness and beauty of that land. Moses must die, and be buried by the Lord before Joshua could lead the people. The devil has ever since been disputing with Jesus about the body of Moses, insisting that the law of Moses is still in force; but still no man has seen the body of Moses to this day. (Jude 9.)

"And the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it." "And they shall bring the glory and honor of the nations into it."—Rev. xxi. 24, 26. The glory and honor of earthly kings and nations thus referred to is that they represent in type and figure the glory and honor of the kingdom or church of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is the holy city, the new Jerusalem. This city is not visible to mortal sight, nor can mortal intelligence comprehend it; its glory and honor and absolute perfection are not seen by the natural man, but are represented to the faith of God's people by natural objects, as a city, a kingdom, mountains and all hills, trees and all cedars, the sun and moon and all the stars of light. In this the kings and nations of the earth bring their glory and honor into this city by setting forth to the understanding of faith some part or feature of that city which is the perfection of beauty. Not that any earthly king or nation is able to add anything to the honor and glory of this church of the Lord Jesus Christ. If the greatest king who ever reigned on earth should come to the gospel church he would come as helpless as a little babe, and as destitute of any personal riches and honor as the most abject beggar in the world. The kings and nations do not know that they are bringing any honor and glory into the church any more than the natural sun, shining in his midday splendor, knows that he is representing the infinite glory of the Sun of Righteousness, who has arisen upon Zion with healing in his wings. It is only the Lord's people who see this glory by faith, and who bring it into the church in this sense, and thus recognize Jesus as the One unto whom all honor and glory belong; and those who have this glorious revelation of Jesus and the church are standing at the time on the great and high mountain of God's holiness.

August 15, 1910.

THE LAWYER AND THE RULER

"Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."—Matthew xxii. 35-40.

This same incident is related in Luke x. 25-37, but at greater length, and somewhat differently, as is generally the case where the same incident is told in different books of the gospel. "And, behold, a certain lawyer stood up, and tempted him, saying, Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? He said unto him, What is written in the law? how readest thou? And he answering, said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself. And he said unto him, Thou hast answered right: this do, and thou shalt live. But he, willing to justify himself, said unto Jesus, And who is my neighbor?" Replying to this question the

Savior relates the wonderful story of the man who fell among thieves, and of the good Samaritan, a parable which shows most clearly and deeply the spiritual meaning of the word "neighbor." In all that is related of this lawyer we see no sorrow, no anxiety about himself, no assertion that he has kept the law, no question, What lack I yet? no desire for Jesus' favor or help, but only a wish to tempt him to say something which his enemies may use against him, and an attempt to justify himself. He does not use the word "good;" does not say, "Good Master," nor ask what good thing he shall do to inherit eternal life. He is standing among the Pharisees, and is evidently one of the dear Savior's bitter enemies.

Another incident somewhat similar to this, but of a very different character, is recorded in three of the gospels: Matt. xix. 16; Mark x. 17, and Luke xviii. 18. As recorded by Matthew we read: "And behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven; and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions." In Mark it is said that the young man came running and kneeled unto him as he asked the question, showing great anxiety of mind, and faith to believe that Jesus was able to relieve his mind of its burden of trouble. Also in this place it is said that Jesus beholding him loved him. This decides the question as to whether this young man was one of the Lord's people, and already a quickened soul. We do not find in the Scriptures that Jesus loves, or ever has loved, any but his own people. If it can be truly said of one, Jesus loved him, that one will surely sing in glory. "Having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end."

In Luke we find that the young man was a ruler. In each of the three places where this is recorded it is related that Jesus asked of this man, "Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God." He did not say, I am not good, but here makes clear and prominent the truth that goodness belongs alone to God, and that he is the source of all the true goodness that is ever found in this world. Goodness is in him, not as a man, but as "God manifest in the flesh." No works of man can be called good, only as they are wrought in and through him by the Lord. The mystery of godliness is, Christ in us the hope of glory.

"Why callest thou me good?" The Savior will have us know why any man can be called good: only as being a son of God through Jesus Christ; only as having Christ as our goodness and righteousness. Then the six of the ten commandments are repeated which refer to our conduct towards men. When replying to the lawyer the Savior named the whole of the commandments as two, the first referring to our conduct toward the Lord: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind;" and the second, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." In replying to this young man he does not refer to the first four at all, but only to the six which refer to our relations and obligations to our fellow-man. The young ruler hears them only in the letter, and answers accordingly: "All these things have I kept from my youth up." So Saul of Tarsus would have answered: "Touching the righteousness which is in the law I am blameless." Saul did not at that time know of any other righteousness than that which came through the literal keeping of the law; nor did he know then that there was any need of it. He was satisfied with himself and his righteousness. Nor did the young man know of any other righteousness than that which the literal observance of the law gave him, yet he evidently had been prepared by the quickening power of the Spirit to feel the need of something more than that which this keeping of the commandments gave him, for he said, "What lack I yet?"

It is evident that this dissatisfaction with himself weighed heavily and acutely upon his mind, otherwise why should he have come running and kneeled to Jesus? It was then, when he had declared that he had observed these commandments from his youth, and yet felt that he lacked something; had not stolen, had not committed adultery, had not lied, nor done anything to the injury of his neighbor, and yet was not at rest nor satisfied with himself; it was then that this sweet declaration is given us, that "Jesus beholding him, loved him." Jesus did not love him because of any goodness that was his on account of his having kept the law, for those whom he loves now he has loved with an everlasting love. This was the love, I think, with which he loved this young man, to whom he was now going to show that he had never kept the law in its spirituality; had never yet known the real power of that law by which is the knowledge of sin. "One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved; for he had great possessions." It has been thought that the cause of his sorrow was that he understood that Jesus required him to sell his great possessions in order that he might have eternal life, and that he did not want to part with them and was very much grieved because he must. My mind upon this subject has been that these great possessions were just then of but little value in the eyes of this young man. It appears to me that he is looking now upon these possessions as evi-

dences that he is not in the kingdom of heaven, and that he can never come there. Why had he not long ago given these riches to the poor? If he had loved his neighbor as himself, which the Savior named to the tempting lawyer as the second commandment, why had he not given them to his neighbors? When one is laboring under a sense of his lack of true righteousness, and heavy laden under a sense of sin, how trifling do all the riches of this world appear. The thought that he has spent his time in gathering them and hoarding them is enough to make him go away sorrowful.

But now a deeper work is going on in the heart of this ruler. He has gone away sad, but he has not gone beyond nor away from the love of Jesus. He is now feeling the vanity and emptiness of all that righteousness which he had hitherto boasted of so proudly in his own heart and before men, as he had of his literal riches. Now this poor young man is feeling what the dear Savior is saying to his disciples: "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God." This is what I think this young man is feeling concerning himself. He sees no way in which such a sinner can enter into that holy kingdom. When the disciples are astonished at his words, Jesus varies the expression, and says, "Children, how hard is it for them that trust in riches to enter into the kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God. And they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, Who then can be saved?"

These disciples were poor men, and yet they seemed to include themselves among those rich men who could not be saved. It would seem that they are made to think of another kind of riches than that which appears in silver and gold, and houses and lands. They are thinking of the riches of self-righteousness, which the flesh is always seeking to obtain and hoard up; and it is this, and the vanity of all such riches, and of the hopes built upon them, and the impossibility of obtaining the favor of Jesus by them, which this sad and sorrowful young man is feeling as he wanders alone in his gloom. Impossible. Yes, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. But a camel cannot go through the eye of a needle; then who can be saved? It is impossible, and not only so, but every child of God at some point in his experience has to feel that impossibility concerning himself; and he is alone then, as Jacob was when he lay with a stone for his pillow, and again when he wrestled with the angel; alone with this impossibility, a poor, helpless creature, with no right to heavenly blessings, with no hope of ever entering into the kingdom of God. But what a glorious light is this that now appears shining through the gloom! "With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible." This is indeed a glorious time when we can see the impossibilities with men become possible with God. The thing that appeared to us impossible is done; that which in our view was as impossible as for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, is accom-

plished; the sinner is saved from his sins and made pure and holy. The last vestige of his legal riches, his self-righteousness, in which he had trusted, is gone, and he is without hope in the world. Then suddenly the sorrow and gloom and loneliness disappear, and he is made to rejoice in a new and glorious hope, a hope of righteousness, not by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ, who is of God made unto us righteousness. Oh, how good it is for the poor sinner who has labored in vain to make himself acceptable unto God by some work of his own, to read concerning this rich young man that "Jesus beholding him loved him."

October 2, 1910.

THOUGHTS ABOUT PREDESTINATION

When the Lord made the world and created man upon it he foreknew that this man would sin, and that by this sin death would enter into the world. So far as I know, all of our brethren believe this. Having this foreknowledge that man would sin, and still going on in the work of creation, does it not necessarily follow that the Lord's purpose included the entrance of sin and death into the world? Can any one think that when the infinitely wise and omnipotent God created man it was his wish and purpose that he might not sin? Could he not have so arranged that man should not sin? Why may we not think that the eternal God, in his infinite wisdom, purposed thus to display the principles of his infinite justice and judgment, which are the habitation of his throne, and the glorious riches of his love and mercy? Why may we not think that "it was all for the lifting of Jesus on high"? I cannot see anything in these thoughts that should cause one to be offended at them, or at him who utters them, especially one who loves the blessed doctrine of salvation by grace, and this grace given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Of course the Lord does not regard sin in the same way that he regards holiness. Of course his attitude towards it is not the same. How could one have such a thought? He hates and abhors sin; his infinitely holy nature is absolutely and forever opposed to it; it is obnoxious to him and abominable in his sight. The thoughts I have expressed are not contrary to this truth, although they present a deep mystery which human intelligence cannot fathom. The Lord has power and control over sin, instead of being in any sense controlled by it. It could not have entered into the world if it had been his will and purpose that it should not, and after sin came into the world, and ever since, his control over it has been absolute. Men of the world and wicked men are his hand and sword. (Psalms xvii. 13, 14.) The wicked can go no farther in executing their wicked designs than will be for the fulfilling of his decrees concerning them. To them, as to the sea, he says, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed." He must have had a purpose concerning all sin and wickedness, and does overrule all the wicked devices

of men to the fulfillment of that purpose. Would not any other consideration of this subject force the conclusion that the Lord was in some degree limited in power and wisdom? The devil can do nothing only as the Lord gives him the power; he cannot even drown a herd of swine without the permission of Jesus. "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."—Prov. xvi. 4. Could it possibly be that God was ever disappointed or disconcerted? Could anything ever occur contrary to his purpose?

"I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."—Isaiah xlvi. 9-11. How clearly this Scripture, as also many other portions of the inspired Scriptures of truth, declares the soveregn counsel, purpose and power of God.

In opposing the doctrine of the predestination of all things, some, not many, I hope, constantly repeat a list of the vilest crimes and then ask, Did the Lord predestinate these? When Scriptures are quoted to them which declare plainly that God did predestinate some wicked actions of men, and that he did before of old ordain certain men "to this condemnation," and they are asked to explain such Scriptures, they return to the same line of argument, and repeat again the list of horrible crimes, and speak harshly in denunciation of those who can even think that a holy God could predestinate that such things should be done. But few, I think, venture to deny that all the wicked acts of the men who crucified the dear Savior were predestinated by the Lord. Several years ago I asked a dear, good brother in the ministry how it was that he could believe that all of this wickedness manifested in the crucifixion of Christ was predestinated, and that no other wicked actions were. His reply was, "That was different." Jesus was delivered to those wicked men "by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God;" they were gathered together to do what God's "hand and counsel determined before to be done." What God had declared by all the prophets "he hath so fulfilled." The Lord is under no law but his own will; whatever he does is right in him. His will is the only criterion by which to judge of what he does. His command is the only criterion by which to judge of what is right for any man to do. One says, If God predestinated any evil thing to be done by a wicked man, then he is responsible, and the man is not to blame. This is the reasoning of the carnal mind with regard to the doctrine of election and predestination. But the Bible does not say so. The nonelect feel the blame of their sinful acts, but do not hate the sin, and perish in their wickedness, having not the love of God in their hearts. The elect take blame to themselves for all their sins and

sinfulness, and abhor themselves. They hunger and thirst after righteousness, but acknowledge God's justice in their condemnation, and love him. In his own time the Lord reveals to them Jesus as their righteousness and salvation.

The Lord put a lying spirit in the mouths of Ahab's prophets for a purpose. Dare we question him as to that act? (1 Kings xxii. 23.) We are not qualified to judge of the Lord's work by our natural reasoning powers, we must simply take his word. He works, and none can hinder, and he causes all things to work together for good to them that love him; to them who are the called according to his purpose. Many dear, timid souls are often silenced by the effrontery of those who arrogantly denounce both the doctrine of predestination and those who believe it to be taught in the Bible, so that they almost fear and hesitate to mention certain portions of Scripture, even without comment, for fear of being sharply denounced. But the Scriptures are there, and there they will ever remain; they read the same to-day as they did in Paul's day, and mean the same, and declare as comfortingly now as they did then the infinite sovereignty of God. The natural man is still saying, as in Paul's day, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" And Paul is still replying with apostolic authority and boldness: "Nay, but O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."—Romans ix. 19-23. It cannot be denied that our carnal nature is strongly opposed to this doctrine of personal election and of predestination. The carnal mind is felt by quickened souls to be "enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." How keenly and bitterly I have felt at times this opposition in my own natural mind and heart. It has caused me many deep inward trials as to the Lord's ways and thoughts, trying to understand them, though the Lord tells us that they are higher than our ways and thoughts, as the heavens are higher than the earth. I have been tempted sometimes to listen to those who say of certain clearly expressed Scriptures that they do not mean as they read, because the Lord would not do that way; but there has so far been raised up in my soul a power that has delivered me from these temptations, and has told me to "hold fast the form of sound words," whether I understand them or not, and has shown me a beauty and power and sweetness in the words of truth as given us by the Holy Spirit, and has caused me to feel an unspeakable joy in the truth that "the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," and that "he doeth according to his will

in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" "He doeth his will in heaven, and in earth, and in all deep places."

When I first wrote upon this subject, more than forty years ago, I was not familiar with the London Confession of Faith. I was then reading the Bible constantly; it was my soul's delight to read it. I was thankful to the Lord then, I truly think, for this desire, and I have been more thankful since for that desire and privilege then, when at times my mind has been to me like a desert and a wilderness. But I understood at that time that the London Confession of Faith expressed the sentiments of the Old School Baptists in this country and in England. Since then I have become more familiar with the language of that Confession, and I have to say that I do not see how my sentiments upon this subject could be more clearly and fully expressed outside of the Bible than they are in that Confession of Faith. This doctrine has been called a heresy by some. But why call one a heretic for expressing the doctrine that for two hundred years has been distinguished as the doctrine of the Baptist Church? The Scriptures there referred to are unanswerable.

Suppose that Stephen when suffering the agony of that terrible death at the hands of wicked men could have been made to believe that the Lord had not embraced that wickedness of his enemies in his eternal purpose; would there have been any comfort for him? If he had thought that this act of theirs was not the Lord's will and purpose, could he have been submissive and restful, trusting in the Lord? Could he have had the infinite comfort of saying, "Thy will be done"? Could he have said, in the abiding trust and confidence of heavenly love, assured of the wisdom, power and mercy of God, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge"? When sorely tried by affliction, or persecuted by wicked men, could the saints endure it if they did not believe in a God of purpose, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," in whom they can absolutely trust? Could the poor, tried souls endure one stroke which they believed was not purposed by the God of love and power? How good to feel assured that,

> "Not a single shaft can hit,
> Till the God of love sees fit."

How can any one approach such a subject as this, concerning the purposes and work of the eternal God, in a light and trifling manner? While in a state of mind suitable to the contemplation and discussion of so awful and sublime a subject as that of the eternal purpose which God purposed in himself before the world began, we can hardly think of one being able to bandy epithets with an opponent in debate, and use harsh terms, and coarse language, and bitter denunciations, such as might be expected from rough men disputing in the streets. I do not see why these deeply mysterious and glorious things may not be the subjects of kind, frank and brotherly conversation, without any

rancor or ill-feeling. When we are in intimate conversation with a brother whom we dearly love, if there appears a difference of understanding on any point, how carefully we try to see alike, and to avoid any serious difference, and if we cannot see alike how careful we desire to be that no root of bitterness shall spring up; nothing to cause any disturbance of love and fellowship between us. Upon the subject of predestination I have never considered that there should be a breaking or disturbance of fellowship. If it is to be made a bar of fellowship it must be done by the other party. My fellowship for one whom I esteem and love as a subject of grace cannot be broken or disturbed because he differs with me on that subject, but it may be broken by the manner in which one expresses his difference, and the kind of spirit he manifests in doing so.

DECEMBER 7, 1910.

FRAGMENTS

"CHRIST is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace."—Gal. v. 4. So it appears that a child of God may fall from grace, and no one but a child of God, a living soul, can, for no others have ever been the subjects of grace; no others have ever had a standing in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, nor in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made his people free. But what a fall is that! From grace to works, from the glorious liberty of the gospel, into which grace has brought us, to the hard bondage of the law, from which only the mighty power of God can again cause us to experience gracious deliverance. This fall from grace does not change the nature of the one who has fallen, but greatly changes his condition. He was a child before he fell, and he is a child after; but oh, how different in his condition, how different his feelings. The pride of his heart has caused him to desire some part and some prominence in this work of salvation. Having begun in the Spirit, he now thinks of being made perfect by the flesh. While this boastful pride of his deceitful heart is at work he begins to regard the law as something in the fulfillment of which he had some little part to do in order to his justification; some condition which rests upon him to perform; some work, as circumcision, without which he could not be saved. This doctrine that the sinner has something to do in order to his salvation, suits the carnal mind, and the child of God, when left to himself for a little, is ready to take up with it, but at once he finds himself again "in an iron house of bondage." Now Christ profits him nothing. (Gal. v. 2.) For a living soul a religion without Christ in every part of it is death. Immediately we are in gross darkness, everything to do and no power to work; nothing felt but "the bondage of corruption;" only "a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." Having desired to be under the law, we now hear the law, and we find only work, work, and to no avail. By the law we are only condemned; no grace

here, no mercy, no love, no compassion. What a terrible fall is this for a living soul. But this poor soul still hungers for righteousness, and that righteousness he will surely experience again, and will eat of it to his soul's rejoicing, but it will not be found in himself, nor in any works of the flesh, but in the dear Savior; there it is treasured up in its fullness. Now how humbly and rejoicingly he remembers that in his experience of grace at the first he received the Spirit, not by the works of the law, but by the hearing of faith. So in the Lord's own time he who raised up the Lord Jesus will by him raise up every soul who has fallen from grace. It is no new righteousness that this poor soul who has fallen from grace is raised up unto, but the same that was revealed to him at the first; for the dear Redeemer declares, "My salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished." "My righteousness shall be forever, and my salvation from generation to generation."—Isa. li. 6, 8. The grace from which he fell is the same grace to which he shall be restored, even the grace which was given him in Christ before the world began. (2 Tim. i. 9.)

THE gates of the city that John saw. There were three on each side, making twelve. The walls were salvation, (Isa. xxvi. 1; lx. 18,) and the gates were in the walls. The twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was one pearl. Each gate was Jesus, the Pearl of great price. The gate is not the structure which is used to close the gate, but the open way through which we enter into the city. Jesus is the Way, the Truth and the Life. This is the way spoken of by the psalmist: "Open to me the gates of righteousness: I will go into them, and I will praise the Lord; this gate of the Lord, into which the righteous shall enter." There is no other way into righteousness but Jesus; therefore the psalmist further says: "The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing; and it is marvellous in our eyes. This is the day which the Lord hath made, we will rejoice and be glad in it."—Psalms cxviii. 19, 20, 22-24. This gate, this stone, this day, is each a figure setting forth Jesus as the way, the salvation, the righteousness of his people. Each one of the twelve pearls shows Jesus as the only way of righteousness, through which the Lord's people enter into the favor and presence of God. The value of this pearl is infinite; its beauty, in the eyes of those who enter in through that gate into the city, is unspeakable. The gates of the city shall not be shut at all by day; for there shall be no night there. This was foretold by the prophets. "Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night." The darkness of the legal dispensation is now gone, and the true Light now shineth. In the presence of Jesus there is no darkness, for he is the Sun of Righteousness. In us there is darkness, for we have a carnal nature in which dwelleth no good thing, but when by faith we see Jesus and are privileged to walk in him, then we see how,

even here in this time state, there is no night in the presence of Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, no night in the city of God, the holy city which John saw coming down from God out of heaven.

During the legal dispensation the Lord made darkness his pavilion, in which he came to his people in his fearful majesty and power. In those mysterious ways he made himself known to Moses and the prophets and the children of Israel, although the meaning of all those legal rites and prophetic visions they did not know. But now the darkness is passed, and the gospel light is shining. The Sun of Righteousness arose upon the people of God in the resurrection of Jesus, and the unfailing promise to Zion is: "Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself: for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light;" therefore to the faith of the Lord's people Jesus appears now as the only source of true light, which shall never fail, even here in this world of darkness, but shall ever shine in the darkness of this sinful nature of his people, though that darkness comprehendeth it not, and shall be for their salvation and comfort, and for their guidance in the way of peace and righteousness while they are here in time, and for their eternal glory and blessedness in heaven. Wherever, whenever and from whatsoever direction a poor, trembling soul, fleeing from the wrath to come, approaches and comes in view of the city and church of the living God, there he shall ever find an open gate through which he shall joyfully enter into the city. He will not have to turn and go hunting along the wall of salvation for a gate through which to enter, for there are three gates on each of the four sides, and one will always be found open just where the poor, sorrowing soul stops and stands still, for Jesus is there, the Pearl of great price, himself the gate, the open way into the salvation and eternal favor of God.

Jesus bore the sins of every one who ever has felt, and ever shall feel, the burden and condemnation of his sins, and has mourned for them, and he will always be present when one of them is laboring and heavy laden, for he calls them to himself, and they find him the Pearl. If the whole world were a perfect pearl, what were its value compared with Jesus? And "every several gate was of one pearl," and the gates of the city shall not be shut at all by day. Christ crucified is always preached wherever a sinsick soul is mourning, and though it be midnight darkness on the earth, and midnight darkness in that mourning soul, light will appear with the appearing of Jesus. While we are looking for him to come down from heaven, or to come from some place where he may be waiting in the world, we are joyfully surprised to find that he is here, even in our hearts. He was there all the time, now he appears. They were talking about him in the upper room, when he appeared, saying, "Peace be unto you." The gate that we felt sure could not be opened for such sinful creatures as we felt ourselves to be is already open; indeed, it has never been shut at all by day, and there is no night in the presence and kingdom of the risen Jesus. Oh,

that I might feel and know more fully and clearly by faith the power and blessedness of that light while waiting and watching for it in this world of sin and sorrow.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."—Romans viii. 19. This creature must be one that knows the sons of God, and that desires and earnestly expects and waits for the manifestation of that sonship in himself. It seems that it must be the same creature that "was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." No one can hope for anything of which he knows nothing; he must both desire and expect that which he hopes for. The natural man does not, and cannot, know the things of the Spirit, and therefore he cannot hope and be waiting for them. If any man be in Christ he is a new creature, and henceforth desires and earnestly waits for the manifestation of divine life and spiritual sonship in himself. This new creature, I have thought, is the only creature who was made subject to vanity unwillingly. This new creation is never satisfied while under the law or while in the flesh. The natural man does not feel the flesh to be a "bondage of corruption," but the new creature does, and longs to be delivered from it into the glorious liberty of the children of God. I have regarded it as the new or spiritual creation which groaneth and travaileth in pain together, throughout all the patriarchal and legal dispensations until now, when the gospel dispensation is established, and not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit; that is, the apostles and men of grace now, groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. It is not the body that desires and waits for its own redemption, but the new creature, the man who is in Christ, the man who is created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. The body cannot desire its own resurrection, nor feel the vanity of fleshly things unwillingly, but it is the one who is spiritually alive who is looking for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, "who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Through all the Old Testament Scriptures we read our own feelings in the experiences recorded there of those who were subjected to the vanity of the flesh unwillingly, and groaned under the bondage of corruption, longing to be delivered from it, and comforted by the hope in which the Lord hath subjected his people unto this vanity. This hope of deliverance and full redemption is sometimes very faint, but never goes out. We cannot have the things embraced in that precious hope while here, except by faith, and that makes us groan and suffer pain while in this mortal body. We are saved by this hope. "But hope that is seen, is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet

hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." So we continue to hope for that blessed change, and so do we with patience wait for it.

THE things pertaining to the kingdom of God are hid from the wise and prudent, and are revealed unto babes. This must be a most important and wonderful thing, for the dear Savior rejoiced in Spirit and thanked the Father that it is so. (Matt. xi.) How good it is for the babes. If these things were to be given according to our ability to earn and to understand them, and our worthiness to receive them, then the babes, and the others who are weak and poor and helpless, would come short altogether. So there comes a time in the experience of every child of God when he feels that he has great reason to join with the Savior in thanks to the Father that these are revealed only to babes. "Except a man be born from above he cannot see the kingdom of God." One who is newly born is a babe. The wise and prudent cannot see the kingdom of God by virtue of any powers that they possess in their natural minds, and cannot therefore talk understandingly about anything belonging to that kingdom, for they do not know anything about it. As the apostle says, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14. It was God's purpose that it should be so. "In the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom knew not God," and this is the only reason ever given, or ever to be given, for anything which the Lord does: "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." But the babes can prattle and talk sweetly and understandingly about these things, for they know them, they are born into them. These babes do not know that they are talking most clearly the language of Canaan, any more than the natural babe knows that it is talking the language of its mother.

"BEHOLD, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." David did not say this as though it would lessen the blame of his sin in any degree, but the Holy Spirit caused him to express in this way that which explains the terrible nature and quality of sin. Of course there is no blame for anything to be attached to the unborn child. From a human standpoint the little infant child cannot be regarded as a sinner; neither does the law of God point out the infant as worthy of blame as an infant because of any sinful act. It is a sinner only as a branch of a bad tree, as a stream from a corrupt fountain. It was born into an inheritance which is corruptible, defiled, and that fadeth away. There must be another birth from another head before there can be an entering upon an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. "By one man sin entered into the world." "By one man's disobedience many were made sinners." The psalmist acknowledges this sinfulness of his depraved

nature, and all the evil thoughts and sinful acts resulting from it, as something for which he is justly condemned in the sight of God, and the blame for which he feels, though the sinfulness reaches back before his birth, to Adam's transgression. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight; that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom."

FEBRUARY, 1911.

FRAGMENTS

WHAT a wonder of wonders is presented in the fortieth Psalm! Here is one who has long been sunken down in a horrible pit and in the miry clay. He has known that help could come only from the Lord, and therefore has not looked to any other source, but has waited patiently (continuously, enduringly) for the Lord, crying steadily day and night unto him. Now at last the Lord has inclined unto him and heard his cry; he has also delivered him out of the awful depths of sin, has placed his feet upon a rock and established his goings, and put a new song in his mouth, even praise unto his God. Now he is favored to make the Lord his trust, and to rejoice in the wonderful works which he has done, and in his thoughts which are to usward. He also says, "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." Neither has he hid that law and the loving-kindness of the Lord in his heart, but has preached righteousness in the great congregation. Now we can but look with wonder and admiration and longing desire upon such a wonderful man as this, and wish that we might be righteous and holy as he. We can feel something of what he declares concerning his experience; we remember the horrible pit; we remember the deliverance from it; we remember when we could not help singing the praise of God; the song was in our heart and mouth, and sang itself. But surely this man who is talking in this Psalm is pure and holy and obedient, and must be far from ever having sinned since the time of that deliverance, while we, how often we have sinned in heart and lip and life. What can we say, what can we do, when we feel within us such "a vain, deceitful heart, and wretched, wandering mind"? We love to read of this holy man, who wrote so wonderfully of his experience and work, and would love to be near him. But what right have we to be near him? What comfort can he be to us? His purity and holiness stand in strong and striking contrast to our sinfulness and depravity. But now the sweet wonder of this Psalm shines through our gloom and brings us unexpected joy and comfort. After having preached righteousness, and declared the salvation of the Lord, and told of his delight to do the will of God, we find this same man crying for mercy, saying, "Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord: let thy loving-kindness and thy truth continually preserve me.

For innumerable evils have compassed me about." We might think that these evils were losses, crosses and persecutions, and such things of a worldly nature as often come upon good men, so we would get no help or comfort from this. Certainly, we think, there can be no such sinfulness in the heart or life of such a holy man as we feel in ours. But the next expression brings him near to us, causing us to feel a sweet and solemn surprise: "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me." What a wonder is this, and what an unexpected source of help and consolation. The same one who has spoken so confidently of righteousness and salvation is now telling our iniquities in telling of his own. And who can this be? What sacred mystery is here? We are told that the Spirit of Christ was in the prophets when they spoke of his sufferings, and the glory that should follow; and David says, "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." The dear Savior has borne all the iniquities of his people. "In all their afflictions he was afflicted." He is with them both in their sorrows and in their joys. They must know the fellowship of his sufferings. When any sin pains our conscience it is because he bore that sin, died for it and rose for our justification. It was not the iniquities of Jesus, as a man, that he died to atone for, for he had none, but those of his people. The poor publican could not look up, but he went down from that scene of suffering to his house justified. The wonderful works of Jesus, and his thoughts which are to usward, are more than can be numbered. (Verse 5.) Then they are set over against the innumerable evils that compassed him about, and his iniquities which were so many. This is an unspeakable consolation to that one who often fears that his transgressions, which he hates and loathes, have forever shut him out from the love and favor of God. But now Jesus is with us in the valley, in the darkness, in the suffering for sin, in the temptation, to deliver us, and he says for our salvation and for our comfort, "But I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me: thou art my help and my deliverer; make no tarrying, O my God." Jesus was buried by baptism into death for the sins of his people; he was raised up from that horrible pit by the glory of the Father, and he brought up all the church of God. As each one is made to experience the power of this resurection of Christ his feet are set upon the Rock, his goings are established in the gospel and the new song is put in his mouth, even praise to our God. He is forever freed from the power and dominion of sin, and yet will be in conflict with sin while he remains in this world. He will be poor and needy while in the flesh, but rich in faith, and will be finally "delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

Matthew xvi. 13-24

Peter answered the question of Jesus with the assurance of faith, and said confidently, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." He also had the word of Jesus that such knowledge had been revealed unto him, not by flesh and blood, but by the Father alone. So every living soul has received from the Father the revelation of this truth, and holds it by faith alone, and not by the natural understanding. Upon this truth that Christ is the Son of God is built the church. Upon this truth revealed is built every good hope through grace. This knowledge of Jesus as the Son of God can come from no earthly source, and can never be destroyed. But how little Peter knew at that time of the power and experience of this truth which he was able so confidently to utter. He must now begin to know about this knowledge, and how it comes. "From that time forth Jesus began to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." Now these are the things the knowledge of which must necessarily follow in the disciples the knowledge by faith that Jesus is the Son of God. But Peter, who as yet did not know how this knowledge of Jesus comes into the experience of his disciples as a living reality, took Jesus "and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." But Jesus turned and said unto Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan; thou are an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." This was the appointed and only way in which Jesus must come unto his people in their salvation. There were terrible depths of suffering into which he must go down, but every pain he endured was necessary, every pang was precious. He knew that the power of the Father, whose will he came to do, would make him willing to bear every stroke laid upon him by the hand of eternal justice, to endure every throb of agony in that awful hour of unspeakable anguish. Therefore the expression of the natural sympathy of Peter, and his urgent opposition to the thought of Jesus' suffering, were an offence unto Jesus; hence he said unto Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan." Our natural minds cannot understand the need of these sufferings on the part of Jesus, and cannot be reconciled to them. To know Jesus we must know the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his suffering, being made conformable unto his death. (Phil. iii. 10.) The flesh shrinks from such sufferings, and the natural mind says, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." We cannot see it necessary. The wisdom of the world fails utterly here; it cannot see the necessity of suffering and death in order to salvation; it counts such strokes of affliction as an evidence of anger. This earthly wisdom says that one who is righteous and pure, as Jesus was, should have praise and comfort and good treatment, instead of strokes and misery and death. But the dear Savior goes on to show that the path of himself and his people in this world

is a path of suffering instead of ease and comfort, and says: "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." He shows us, from that time forth, that the path of his followers is a path of self-denial and a constant cross. Our own will must be crossed, we cannot have our own way. We must suffer with Jesus before we can reign with him. Only as the sufferings of Christ abound in us will our consolation abound by Christ. (2 Cor. i. 5.) So it is in tender compassion and infinite loving-kindness that Jesus commands and works this self-denial in the hearts and lives of his people, and appoints their cross. That sympathy which insists upon an effort to evade this suffering and avoid the cross is an offence unto Jesus and his people. We preach not only Christ, but Christ crucified, and this is, to the believer, the power of God and the wisdom of God.

"Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father." How glad I am that this does not read, without your Father's notice. How much better it is than that, as the true reading of the inspired Scriptures of truth is always better than any attempted change can make it. The writing as it comes to us by the Holy Spirit cannot be improved. No change, no addition or subtraction by any man can be properly thought of or allowed. It is often the case that by tradition we have received a portion with some word added or omitted, and have kept on using it in that form, without paying attention to the incorrectness of it until it is especially brought to our notice. But when the Lord gives it to us in our own experience we find what is wrong, then we want it just as the Lord gave it to us. To say, without your Father's notice, would imply that the Lord was observing things that are passing around him, as we do, and that he notices the events as they transpire, and takes measures according as it then appears to him necessary. But the Lord's people want something nearer and better than that in their heavenly Father, upon whom they depend for every breath they draw, and for every help and comfort they receive, and whom they worship, saying, as the Syrophœnician woman and the leper did, "Lord, help me." "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." And they have something better; their Father not only sees and notices the falling of a sparrow, but one of two sparrows which are in the air together cannot fall on the ground without him, and we must say, as a necessary conclusion, that the other cannot stay in the air without him, "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." But shall we say that the Lord directs the movements of such little things as sparrows, which are sold for only half a farthing each? Why not? Look through the Bible and see the numerous circumstances in which it is declared that the Lord directed the movements and works of lions and bears and reptiles and worms and flies to the accomplishment of his just and holy purposes, even making a covenant for his

people with the beasts of the field, and with the fowls of heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground. (Hosea ii. 18.) This is good, to know and to be repeatedly told that our God has the directing and controlling power over all things, all creatures, all events, and that he is infinite in wisdom and in goodness, and that his love passes knowledge. I love to think and know that when a sparrow falls on the ground, the time appointed for it so to fall has come, and that our Father is seen by the faith of his little ones to be there in the fulfillment of his wise purpose concerning it; and in that tender love and care manifested in this sweet illustration we can hear him saying to our trembling, anxious souls, "Fear ye not therefore; ye are of more value than many sparrows."

"As THE days of a tree are the days of my people."—Isaiah lxv. 22. What a peculiar figure: "The days of a tree." This signifies life, growth, enlargement from within. Very different the signification if we should say, The days of a house, or the days of a city. No life signified by this, just dead days, or years, just telling how long the house or city has been there. If there has been enlargement it has been by addition from without; no growth here, but a new house or a new city put side by side with the old one. But the tree has been constantly changing, enlarging, and yet it is the same one tree. Every year it has been sending out from itself buds, which have extended and grown into branches, yet it is one tree. Every year the branches have increased and multiplied, like the increasing and multiplying generations of men upon the earth, yet the same days cover and include all this increase. Every last year's branch has sent out this year many branches, yet each of these multiplied offshoots is counted with the tree, and has as many days as the germ which first broke through the soil five hundred years ago. Each branch in a perfect tree is equally a part of the tree with every other branch, nor can one branch be regarded as having any advantage over any other, or as lacking any quality which any additional number of days would give it. The offshoot of to-day bears the same kind of fruit as was borne by every branch a hundred years ago. One part of the tree cannot be enlarged or improved by itself by some extra care given to itself exclusively. Every part of the tree must partake of whatever good is given to the tree. So are the days of the Lord's people in the new gospel heavens and earth. "Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands." The elect are branches of the Tree whose Root is Christ. As branches of the Tree they are elect only in him by vital union, and do their work only in him. The work of their hands is not counted as the work of individual branches, but as the work of the whole tree. If one branch should begin to boast of its abundance of gospel fruit, the Tree would softly rebuke it by saying, "From me is thy fruit found." So if one branch should dictate to another, and tell it what to do, it would feel the reproving whisper, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord."

"There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days." The infant of days has all the life and all the power and all the age and all the wisdom of the tree, though the tree be a hundred years old. And so fully is this truth meant, that the child that should die would be in this sense a hundred years old, having all the same advantage of that spiritual life as though it had lived to a hundred years.

March 21, 1911.

As to whether we shall know each other in heaven, and how, I am willing to wait until we get there. The Lord knows what will be best for us, and what will be for our most complete and perfect happiness, and we may well trust all that to him. We do not know what we shall want to make us perfectly satisfied in glory, but our dear Savior does, and he has all power to accomplish it in and for us. One thing is certain: we shall know each other in him, and shall be like him, and that will be our unspeakable and endless felicity.

August, 1911.

FRAGMENTS

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."—Psalms cxxii. 1. I am looking out upon the landscape, admiring its beauty, every feature of which is brought out clearly by the glorious sunlight. My mind is pleased by it. Perhaps I see some work needing to be done on the farm, in the store or in the shop, and I am arranging for that work. It may be I am suffering pain in my body, and groans force themselves from my lips, or I am gratified by the sweet taste of some luscious fruit, or am glad because I have learned that some enterprise of mine has been successful, or I am feeling the comfort of needed rest of body or of mind. During all this time there is something going on down deep in the secret recesses of my soul, out of all natural sight, that seems to have no reference to, or connection with, these various natural circumstances or conditions; all this undercurrent of thought and feeling has reference to my condition as a sinner in the sight of the holy and just God.

While the work in the field, or the store, or workshop, is going on, or the necessary food or rest is being taken, the mind is still considering the exceeding sinfulness of sin, the impossibility of a sinner ever becoming righteous, the necessity of sin being punished, because God is holy, and justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne, and yet it feels continually a hungering and thirsting after righteousness; and while the work about us is continued, and we are talking about it, and faithfully doing our duty in it, and appreciating the intervals of rest, and the necessary satisfaction of the appetite, within our souls the cry is still going on: "God be merciful to me a sinner." "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." No hope for a sinner. How shall a man be just with God? No way for a sinner to be holy;

no way in which he can enter into the house of the Lord, or ever dwell in the favor of God. How those with whom we are doing business, conversing concerning worldly affairs, counting, arranging, paying and receiving, how they would wonder if they could know what thoughts there are down deep in our hearts, if they could hear the groanings that cannot be uttered, the cries, Who hath sorrow like my sorrow? I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes. The troubles of my heart are enlarged. But they cannot hear or know of these inward workings, these sighs and cries and sinkings down, they cannot hear the whirlwind in the soul by which the Lord prepared Job, and prepares all his people to hear his solemn questions, and to cry out, Behold, I am vile. Job's friends could not hear that, nor can any one, until the Lord speaks to him out of the whirlwind. But now, in his own good time and way, the Lord causes the poor soul to feel a wonderful, unspeakable change. For the first time he feels true gladness. Down in the depths of the soul he feels that all the elements, conditions and circumstances of sorrow are gone, and in solemn and joyful surprise he breaks out in such language as that used by the psalmist: "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord." This gladness is of a different nature from any ever felt before, as the psalmist says again, "Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased." I said that to myself more than forty-seven years ago, on a Monday morning, when I first felt this spiritual gladness in the hope just given me that I was one of those for whom Jesus died. The natural circumstances may continue, and the natural work go on, and the men with whom we are engaged in the business of the world can see nothing of that which caused this gladness to be felt; they can only see the glow upon the face caused by the sunshine in the heart but the change to us seems absolute and radical; all within is light, and a deep, solemn gladness reigns, and every element of sorrow seems to us to be taken from all the scenes and circumstances and work of a worldly kind, so that we may feel an assurance that we are done with sorrow, because, as it seems to us, our sins, which were the cause of all our sorrow, are gone forever. Oh, how much we have yet to learn concerning the sinfulness of our old carnal nature, and concerning the glorious justice and infinite mercy and grace of our God. This "they" who said, "Let us go into the house of the Lord," are all who have known the way of the Lord.

They are all the prophets and holy men of old, who spake of this gladness and salvation as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. What the great company of the Lord's servants may be, and who they are, who say unto the Lord's people, one by one, "Let us go into the house of the Lord," who can tell? It would seem as if the whole atmosphere were filled with the power and melody of that wonderful call, as it was when the multitude of the heavenly host sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." The house of the

Lord is made up of the saints, who "are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: in whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."—Eph. ii. 20-22. We cannot go into that house, cannot find fellowship with the church of the living God, until that sweet and precious call comes into our souls. When the word comes directly to us with power, then that door of gospel fellowship and love is at once wide open unto us, and none can shut it. As soon as our souls experience love and fellowship for the saints, they also have love and fellowship for us, which is manifest as soon as ours is manifest to them, and then all the beauty and attraction of gospel doctrine and order are felt by us. We may be as little children, who cannot understand the deep things of the gospel, but we love them at once, and in our very souls we say, "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem."

We want to stand in the order of the gospel, and desire that our feet may never be found outside of those lovely gates, but that we may always walk in Christ. We feel such a love and union with those who love the truth that we can feel the power of the next sweet expression of this Psalm: "Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together," and we want to keep going up there, with all the tribes of the Lord, to the testimony of Israel, "to give thanks unto the name of the Lord."

"I was glad." The Lord has made us glad through his works. We may have gladness on account of some natural benefits, but this is different, higher, sweeter, holier. While we are thankful, or want to be, for all temporal blessings, we know they are only for time, but this reaches forward beyond time, and our thanks seem deeper, or we feel they should be. We may have deep, worldly affliction, and be full of pain and anguish, but this gladness is not lessened by them, but rather enhanced. We may have anxiety concerning our worldly work, or concerning our temporal condition, as sickness, loss, poverty, but this gladness makes the afflictions and sorrows of this life seem light and but for a moment, while we are looking upon the unseen things that are eternal. We may be left to mourn deeply because of sins and transgressions, and may be brought into great darkness and feel self-reproach and soul trouble, and may fear that the Lord can never be favorable unto us again, but that he has surely forgotten to be gracious, because he has had no reason to remember us in mercy and grace any more. But after the Lord has restored our souls, and shown us again his mercy, which endures forever, as he surely will, then we shall remember, and particularly notice, that in the very darkest hour, and in the deepest afflictions of soul, that gladness with which we first felt the fellowship of the saints, and went into the house of the Lord, was never quite gone. Even when we were most terribly tempted to doubt whether we were sons of God, or had any part or lot

in the matter, even then there was in our inmost souls a solemn gladness because we had ever loved the saints and the things of the kingdom of God. When we have once known the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and have felt bound up with the saints in the bundle of life, the gladness that then comes to us can never be wholly lost or forgotten. Those in whom this heavenly love has once been felt are born of God, and shall dwell with him in glory.

"FORGETTING those things which are behind." There are a great many things that it were better to forget. Not our sorrow and grief on account of our sins. The sins ought to be remembered to be abhorred and to keep us in mind of the great mercy of our Savior. Paul never forgot that he persecuted the church of God. But has any one done us a wrong and an injury? Forget it. Has one spoken to us with unjust sharpness and undeserved indignation? Forget it. Forget the unkind look, the unjust word, the injurious act. "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him, and he shall bring it to pass." I learned long ago that a minister of the gospel need never defend himself, if he is assuredly in the right; all he need do is to go on in his work, and he will find that the Lord is his defense against every foe, against every wrong, against every act of persecution for righteousness' sake. The same is true of every child of God. If he undertakes to fight in his own behalf he will do the poorest kind of work, and will do himself injury, but if he is enabled by grace to stand still, so far as the trouble is concerned, and keep right on in his true work, he will surely see the salvation of the Lord, and will be melted down by the love of Jesus, and the kind and loving remembrance of the Lord. The one who is in the fault has the hardest time, and often the soft answer will result in a humble acknowledgment. Forget many things that men have said and done, but never forget one of the dear Lord's benefits, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." How precious are those benefits, as they are sweetly and solemnly recounted in the following part of this one hundred and third Psalm, and then how precious it is to be told that the Lord is not under any misapprehension as to those who receive these benefits. They can never repay him in any way, except to thank and praise him as he shall enable them to do. "For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." It seems to us that he could not know how utterly weak and helpless we are, merely dust, as we are learning from day to day; but he assures us that he does know, and yet the benefits continue and increase in value and in preciousness as we continue to increase in the knowledge of our unworthiness of them.

"WHEN Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."—Col. iii. 4. Is Christ my life? That is what my mind dwells much upon at present. My own life seems so vile when the true light shines upon me, my heart so full of evil and

my mind so occupied with the vain and transitory things of time, that I can hardly endure the way it seems that the Lord must regard me. He is so pure and holy, and above all praise, and I so polluted. But now it comes to me with new light and power: Christ is my life. That seems enough to satisfy my inmost longing. This appears now to be a most precious truth, a glorious doctrine, but when shall I be enabled to say in the light and experience of this truth, I am satisfied? It must be by a powerful working of faith that my soul can now in any measure lay hold upon this truth. What a holy, pure and devoted life the Savior lived while here in the flesh, how sinless he was while bearing the sins of his people, an awful load. He knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth. How patiently he bore his terrible afflictions, how careful he was in his devotion to the law to keep all the commandments, how devoted he was in prayer to the Father. He withdrew from the importunities of those who would take him by force to make him king, and went up into the mountain alone to pray. How could he be in need of prayer? He could feed a multitude with a few loaves and fishes, and could command the raging winds and waves to be still, and yet he needed to pray unto the Father. That was because his people throughout the world, and to the end of time, would need to pray. How good he was to the poor and needy; never too weary to help the helpless. When he had fulfilled the time appointed for suffering in the flesh, then, with all the black load of his people's sins upon him, he was baptized into death, thus washing away those sins forever, and justifying all his people by his resurrection from the dead, making them pure and spotless in the sight of God. Thus he fulfilled for them all righteousness. Then he ascended up on high, where he ever lives to make intercession for his people, and to be their righteousness forever. Can it be that this sweet, pure, holy life is mine? That he lives in me? That this vile body will be fashioned like unto his glorious body? That his holy life, which is the light of men, will be forever mine in my experience, during my stay in time, and in that heavenly state? This is enough to make even the hardest and coldest heart rejoice.

November, 1911.

THE SONG OF DEBORAH AND BARAK

(Judges v.)

The history of the children of Israel while under the rule of Judges is of peculiar interest, and more especially so when we are favored to have some understanding of the spiritual meaning of the various incidents which make up that history, for there is no doubt that all the incidents related in the Old Testament, with all the songs that were sung, the prayers that are recorded and the prophetic declarations that were made, have some typical reference to gospel things. Among these judges was one woman, Deborah, a prophetess. "She dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel in

Mount Ephraim; and the children of Israel came up to her for judgment." As was the case with most, if not all of the judges, she had a battle to fight. In every battle which the Lord commanded to be fought, the enemies of the Lord would be overcome, and the land would have rest until the death of that judge; then invariably the children of Israel would do evil in the sight of the Lord, and he would strengthen their enemies against them and sell them into their enemies' hands. After the battle under Ehud the land had rest fourscore years, then they again did evil in the sight of the Lord, and he sold them into the hand of Jabin, king of Canaan, the captain of whose host was Sisera, and who had nine hundred chariots of iron. He mightily oppressed the children of Israel twenty years. Here was a battle to be fought of great spiritual significance, to the particulars of which I will merely allude. It cannot be that a woman should command an army in battle against the enemies of Israel, so Deborah "sent and called Barak, the son of Abinoam, and said unto him, Hath not the Lord God of Israel commanded, saying, Go and draw toward Mount Tabor, and take with thee ten thousand men of the children of Naphtali and of the children of Zebulun? And I will draw unto thee, to the river Kishon, Sisera, the captain of Jabin's army, with his chariots and his multitude; and I will deliver him into thine hand. And Barak said unto her, If thou wilt go with me, then I will go; but if thou wilt not go with me, then I will not go." So they went together and fought the battle, and "God subdued on that day Jabin the king of Canaan before the children of Israel. And the hand of the children of Israel prospered, and prevailed against Jabin the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin king of Canaan."

It is the Lord who fights the battles. No matter how wise and courageous the judge may be under whose command Israel is fighting, it is not for his honor as a man, but we are made to see that it is the Lord who fights the battle, and to him alone is the honor. He may raise up Samson and make him prominent for physical strength and valor, or Gideon to show that numbers are nothing; the battle is always the Lord's. We hear nothing of Shamgar as a captain until he suddenly appears as a man of miraculous power and courage, killing six hundred men with an ox goad; we hear nothing of Barak as a captain of Israel until Deborah calls for him. We may see in Deborah some representation of the church. She calls herself "a mother in Israel." The church can do nothing except as Jesus leads and commands, and Jesus comes into observation only at the call of the church, and to supply her need, and to be a Leader and a Commander of the people.

"Then sang Deborah and Barak the son of Abinoam, on that day, saying, Praise ye the Lord for the avenging of Israel, when the people willingly offered themselves." The desolate and oppressed condition of the people is well described by Deborah: "In the days of Shamgar the son of Anath, in the days of Jael, the highways were unoccupied,

and the travelers walked through byways. The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I, Deborah, arose, that I arose a mother in Israel." The mother in Israel is looking to the villages, the churches, the little companies that love the name of the Lord. It was a time of sorrow and affliction, when the enemy surrounded them, and they had to go hiding themselves; not a weapon of defense within sight. "Was there a shield or spear seen among forty thousand in Israel?" When the call to war came, the heart of Deborah warmed toward the governors of Israel that offered themselves willingly among the people. David thanked the Lord that he and all Israel gave willingly. In the places of drawing water, in the places where the Lord has appointed for his people to come together, where the archers cannot reach them, there they that sit in judgment and walk by the way, they who have been delivered from the noise and tumult of their enemies, are delighted and refreshed as they rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord toward the inhabitants of his villages in Israel. Then shall all the people of the Lord go down to the gates, signifying that they are delivered from fear, and are devoted to the praise of the Lord, for the gates of Zion are praise. In all this battle the Lord alone appears as doing the work. "The Lord discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his host, with the edge of the sword, before Barak." It is the Lord who fought; it is the Lord who brought his help to Israel; it is the Lord who won the victory. And the angel of the Lord pronounced a bitter curse upon the inhabitants of Meroz, because they came not up to the help of the Lord against the mighty. It was, and is yet, the Lord's people who need help, and it was, and is yet, the Lord alone who brings the help; and Meroz was one of the villages whose inhabitants cared not for the Lord's help, which he had declared he would bring to his people, but despised his help, and were cursed, because they trusted in themselves, and not in the Lord "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man."

Now the Lord calls unto Deborah and Barak, saying, "Awake, awake, Deborah; awake, awake, utter a song: arise, Barak, and lead thy captivity captive, thou son of Abinoam." So the Lord says to the church under the law, "Awake, awake, put on thy strength, O Zion," and it is only by the hand of the Captain of the Lord's hosts that Zion can awake and sing. So it appears that in this battle and song of Deborah and Barak are presented in a figurative way some of the glorious things that are spoken of Zion, the church of the living God. The name Deborah signifies order, as the orderly working of a bee. In the church as presented in the Scriptures is seen perfect order. Barak means lightning, brightness, and Abinoam, the father of Barak, signifies father of graciousness, or pleasantness. I merely suggest this. I will also call attention to what is said of Barak, that the Lord made him to have dominion over the nobles among the people: "The Lord made me have dominion over the mighty."

In this song eight of the tribes of Israel are mentioned, and also Machis, the son of Manasseh, with some favorable mention of each, and of all Israel, as having offered themselves willingly. It seems that the care of the mother in Israel is thus manifested toward all the branches of the church under the gospel dispensation. We will now attend more particularly to what is said of Reuben, Judges v. 15, 16: "And the princes of Issachar were with Deborah; even Issachar, and also Barak: he was sent on foot into the valley. For the divisions of Reuben there were great thoughts of heart. Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks? For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart." What literal thing is referred to in the declaration that Barak was sent on foot into the valley in fighting that battle, we are not told, but its spiritual significance, I think, points to Jesus, who was sent into the valley of death to fight the battle in which death was destroyed and his people delivered from the bondage of sin and death. Now from the time of this battle of the Lord against Jabin, and this absolute destruction of Jabin, king of Canaan, we are looking at all things in a gospel light, and this gives place for the statement about the effect of the divisions of Reuben: great thoughts of heart. Then a question is asked why Reuben abode among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks? and this cannot be answered without going back to the time of crossing over Jordan. Then the peculiar statement is again made, with the change of one word: "For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart." Here we may find the spiritual meaning of this expression, "the divisions of Reuben," which occurs twice in this song. When the children of Israel had come to Jordan and were about to cross over, the children of Reuben, the children of Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, asked of Moses that they might have their inheritance on this side of Jordan eastward, and not with the other tribes in the land of Canaan, for they saw that the land of Jazer and the land of Gilead was a place for cattle, and they had much cattle. They said to Moses, "We will build sheepfolds here for our cattle, and cities for our little ones; but we ourselves will go ready armed before the children of Israel, until we have brought them unto their place: and our little ones shall dwell in the fenced cities, because of the inhabitants of the land. We will not return unto our houses, until the children of Israel have inherited every man his inheritance: for we will not inherit with them on yonder side Jordan, or forward; because our inheritance is fallen to us on this side Jordan eastward." And Moses granted their request. (Numbers xxxii.) Here we may find the deep spiritual meaning of this sentence twice repeated in this song: "The divisions of Reuben." Reuben stands for all who inherit on this side of Jordan. When they are fighting with their brethren on the other side of Jordan, against the common enemy, they are divided from their little ones and

their cattle, and when they are home again with their little ones and cattle they are divided from their brethren on the other side.

Even looking at it naturally we can see how this condition of the children of Reuben would give cause for great thoughts and questionings of heart. When fighting in the lead of the tribes, as they had promised to do, they would be anxious about those they had left at home, and would be having great thoughts about them, and as to their duty to be separated from them, and there would be great searchings of heart concerning their own sincerity and devotion in the cause; and when at home they would be restless, and questioning their right to be enjoying a peaceful life at home while there might be work they ought to do for their brethren in the field. But the especial force of this most striking figure is found in the experience of gospel characters.

The children of God under the gospel dispensation experience what is meant by the divisions of Reuben. Not that some of the Lord's people are as those who stayed on this side of Jordan, while others are as those who lived on the other side, but that all partake at different times of the character and experience of both. It is after this gospel song is sung, in which the victory of the Captain of the Lord's people is celebrated, that the spiritual meaning of all these things in this song, and throughout the Old Testament, is brought to view. Now we see the divisions of Reuben manifested while we are in the flesh. Our earthly homes are here in the world, with all our worldly possessions; our cares and responsibilities are here, and all our earthly interests. But now there is an experience within us that draws our minds in a measure away from these worldly interests, and awakens our thoughts and desires to other interests apart from this world. We have now thoughts and yearnings toward another home and other possessions beyond mortal sight. Enemies now appear that we had never known of before. We now also learn that a great battle has been fought for us by the great Captain, in which we had some mystical part that we cannot fully understand. He who thus fought for us went forth to that battle and victory out of Seir, out of the enemy's land. Then the earth trembled, the heavens dropped, the mountains melted before him, and the stars in their courses fought against these enemies. The tribes of the Lord fought under this great Captain, and rejoiced to see the Lord come forth victorious, leading captivity captive. "So let all thine enemies perish, O Lord: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might. And the land had rest forty years." The word "forty" may represent the gospel dispensation. The Lord's people are manifested by a spiritual birth, in which another life is given to them, and all spiritual things are theirs. Now their other home, on the other side of the river, is brought to their view, not to their natural sight, nor to the sight or knowledge of any natural man, but to the view of faith. All the things brought to the view of this faith are attacked,

denied, disputed and reviled by the enemies of the Lord, and by all natural understanding. By the Spirit of God those who have been given this faith are led to contend earnestly for the things thus revealed to them, and so to fight the good fight of faith. We have now this earthly home, and all our worldly interests and possessions and relationships, and these are sometimes so strong in their hold upon us that we can hardly see or apprehend anything beyond our mortal sight. But we have, even while in this earthly house, another home, "an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

This is only in our view when we are looking upon the things which are not seen; then we can understand that our conversation is in heaven, and our real and important interests and possessions and labor are in that home, and that the true life which we now live in the flesh, we live by this faith of the Son of God, which is given to us. Here we see and understand something of the divisions of Reuben. We have a sinful nature, and its tendency is to draw us earthward. If left unrestrained it would lead us toward worldly and sinful things. Because of this double existence, as it were, this living a life on the one side of Jordan and doing business of a spiritual kind on the other side, this fighting with and for our brethren over there and caring for our worldly interests and possessions here, we have great thoughts of heart. We think much about our condition, as having, in a sense, two homes, and wonder at times whether we are really honest and sincere in appearing to have our conversation in heaven, while we are so full of the world and worldly things. Then the question comes with searching power, "Why are we abiding among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks?" This causes great searchings of heart. We search the depths of our being to see what our motives are; we wonder if the Shulamite, the queen of peace, presents in herself the experience of all of the Lord's people, when we see in her, as it were, the company of two armies. "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other."

Sometimes we have great thoughts of heart concerning this earthly home, on this side of Jordan, which our flesh does choose, and feel assured that we can cleanse it from all evil, so that we may live in it purely and contentedly, but we ever fail, and can only have real comfort in it when our victorious Captain appears and makes us feel again by faith his cleansing power and grace. Then again we are among the saints and holy men of old, and are greatly rejoicing in their sweet and delightful company, and wonder, as we feel our hearts respond to the searching power of the Spirit, whether we can ever live contentedly again among our worldly possessions and with our flocks, and be thus at home in the body, while at the same time we are absent from the Lord. What a solemn time it is with us when these great thoughts and searchings of heart are moving and surging within us. One thing is sweet to know: that only the living children

of God can have these two homes, these two kinds of business, and feel within themselves the contending of these two armies which are seen in the Shulamite, the queen of peace. How good it is that our spiritual Barak has led captivity captive, so that never again can the battle be raised up successfully against us. From time to time we shall hear the threatenings of the enemy, and shall fear because of the tumult and the shoutings, but at the name of Jesus the enemy disappears and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, is felt again, and quiet is restored. The great thoughts and searchings of heart will continue, and will be, as they have heretofore always been, of great spiritual value, opening the way into the experience of the richest gospel blessings.

FEBRUARY 9, 1912.

FRAGMENTS

"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

WHO are the righteous and the sinners here spoken of? Simon was righteous in his own estimation. A centurion, a prominent man, said to Jesus, "I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof." But Simon did not hesitate on account of any feeling of unworthiness to ask Jesus to come into his house and dine with him. He evidently thought that whatever honor there might be in having Jesus dine with him was properly his due. He was doubtful of Jesus, and watched him, and criticised him in his own mind, having no question as to his own high character and just deserts. He could readily thank the Lord that he was better than other men, that he was worthy of any special distinction which the Lord might bestow upon any man, and especially that he was not a sinner, like the publican. This is the righteous man whom Jesus did not come to call to repentance. He felt no more need of repentance or forgiveness than a well man feels the need of a physician.

Just then a woman came in and stood behind the Savior weeping, and began washing his feet with her tears and wiping them with the hairs of her head. The Pharisee felt no emotion of pity or sympathy as he heard the sobs of this woman, but began reasoning within himself concerning the character of Jesus, and arrived at the conclusion that he was not what he professed to be. He said to himself, "If this man were a prophet he would know who and what manner of woman this is, for she is a sinner." Jesus then presented a case to Simon which forced from him the reluctant confession that one to whom most was forgiven, the same would love most. Thus his own questioning thoughts concerning Jesus were rebuked, for love, perfect love, was the first and great commandment in the law; and he was compelled to recognize by his mental powers, though he could not feel in his hard heart the difference in this respect between this woman and himself. The Savior then said to him, "Simon, seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my

feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss: but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint: but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much." There is no doubt that this woman was a sinner. Simon said so to himself; Jesus said so, and she by her tears and acts said most plainly that she regarded herself as a very great sinner. Simon was a sinner, but he did not know it; he was righteous in his own estimation. This woman was a sinner, and knew it, and was broken-hearted because of it. She represents all those sorrowful, broken-hearted sinners in all the world, and throughout all time, whom Jesus came to call to repentance. Every such sinner, sorrowful and broken-hearted on account of sin, will surely sing in glory.

"He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee."—Job v. 19.

I HAVE not regarded this saying of Eliphaz to Job as a part of the inspired Scriptures of truth, and I have not felt at liberty to quote this, or any other of the sayings of these friends of Job, as of scriptural force and authority; for the Lord said to Eliphaz, "My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends: for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath." It does not appear to me right to use as the word of God that upon which he has put the seal of his displeasure, as he has upon the sayings of these men: although many of their expressions have the appearance of truth, they will not bear inspection as gospel truth. This saying of Eliphaz is far short of truth. The promise of God is far better than this; he gives in no limited measure, not six times, nor seven, but he says, I will never leave you nor forsake you. He will deliver them from all their troubles. His faithfulness reaches unto the clouds, and his mercy endures forever. These men charge Job with wickedness, and declare that his afflictions and losses and bereavements are sent upon him because of his sins. One sentence of Eliphaz will suffice to show the general tenor of their views concerning his case, and their lack of understanding concerning his condition, and his experience, and concerning the ways of the Lord: "Acquaint now thyself with him, and be at peace: thereby good shall come unto thee." "If thou return unto the Almighty, thou shalt be built up, thou shalt put away iniquity far from thy tabernacles. Then shalt thou lay up gold as dust, and the gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks. Yea, the Almighty shall be thy defense, and thou shalt have plenty of silver."—Job xxii. 21, 23-25. Here it is clearly seen that the doctrine of these men is wrong. They were harsh and unsympathetic in their words and manner toward Job, but it was not their manner that the Lord reproved them for, but their doctrine; they

were not reproved for speaking harshly to Job, but for speaking falsely of God. Job had spoken the thing that was right of the Lord, and they had not. They told him to acquaint himself with God, which no man can do. For no man knoweth the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Besides, Job had already been pronounced perfect by the Lord. If these men had known the Lord by revelation they would have recognized the same knowledge in Job, and would not have told him to acquaint himself with God, but would have known something of the trial he was under, as gold is tried in the fire. In that case, also, they would not have talked as though Job might be persuaded to return unto the Lord by the prospect of thereby having worldly good come unto him, and the assurance that he would then be able to lay up gold of Ophir as the stones of the brooks, and have plenty of silver.

Loss of property, loss of children, worldly adversity or bodily and mental suffering, are not, as Job's friends charged, and as the Lord's people often fear, evidences of God's displeasure; nor are worldly prosperity and circumstances of personal comfort evidences of the favor of the Lord. The Lord's favor was with Lazarus lying in rags and suffering and wretchedness at the rich man's gate, and was not with the rich man, though the difference was not manifested until after death. Worldly wealth and comfort may come as blessings, to be received with thanks, but what jealous care must be felt by the child of God as to the spirit in which he asks for them. The Lord gave the children of Israel their request, but sent leanness into their soul. (Psalms cvi. 15.)

He is a very good speaker, you say, a very good writer, but he fails to cover the whole subject which he is considering. He does not reach out in every direction in which he might go, and does not go exhaustively in any one direction. Whenever I read what he has written I can at once see many things which he did not seem to notice, and many thoughts are suggested to my mind which he did not express, though they are very clear and prominent. Yes, but if he had not written as he did, you would not have seen those things which you say he did not reach; if he had not spoken what he did, those thoughts which he did not express would not have occurred to your mind. His writing and speaking are not exhaustive, but suggestive and comprehensive. Some good writers and speakers exhaust not only the subject, but the reader or hearer also. They go so thoroughly into the subject in hand that they leave nothing for the reader to think out by himself. They give him plenty of things to remember, but nothing to stir up his mind into activity. It is good when you are sent off by the writer or speaker into new fields of thought, which he has not entered himself, but only pointed out to you. It is good to be set to thinking on your own account while you read or hear, so that more thoughts are coming into your mind than are seen on the printed page

or heard in the sermon that is preached. Elder Gilbert Beebe was one who had such a rare gift as this, and I have known many such among our preachers in the last forty-seven years. When I had to preach at associations, I loved to follow Elder Beebe. His preaching stirred up my mind in such a way into activity, and brought so clearly and powerfully to my mind my own experience, touching my heart and filling it with a sense of God's love, and suggesting so many more things than he said, and opening up the depths and heights and power of the word of God's salvation, that when he was done speaking it seemed to me an easy thing to preach. The very atmosphere seemed to me to be full of the power and comfort of the gospel. The relation of an experience of grace is not preaching the gospel, but every gospel sermon does relate more or less of an experience of grace. The word preached by a sent servant of God touches the experience of the same word in the soul of the hearer. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to him who has felt that power in his own soul. There must be at least one believer present, one who has felt the power of God unto salvation, before there can be a gospel sermon. One may point through a window to a glorious scene in the distance, but if there is no one to follow the direction of his hand and see the prospect, the pointing will mean nothing; but when there is one present with eyes and a desire to see what the hand points to, it means much to him as he looks upon the prospect to which his sight is directed. There must be both a preacher and a hearer in order that there shall be gospel preaching. The believer may see much more in the prospect than the one who directs his sight, but he will see in it nothing conflicting, nothing that is not there. He will hear only the words spoken by the preacher, but they may mean much more to him than was in the mind of the one who preached them, as they may have touched a wider and deeper experience of the power of God in his soul. To the believer the gospel is always the power of God unto salvation in such measure as he has experienced that power. (Romans i. 16.)

WHAT a hard time it is with one when he is trying to make himself worthy of the favor and blessing of the Lord. His sins are ever before him, and his unworthiness seems to increase in magnitude, so that he has to say, "The troubles of my heart are enlarged." He cannot think of the possibility of coming into the favor of God while his iniquities are so in the way; and whether in his first experience on account of sin, or in his after life, when the vileness of his nature is brought to his mind, and sin sits heavy on his soul, the first thing that it seems necessary for him to do is to cleanse his soul from sin and get free from his transgressions. So this is all the work he tries to accomplish whenever his sins are felt as a new burden, and many a day is made dark with night while he is about this work, which is impossible with men. It seems almost impossible for a poor soul, burdened with a sense of sinfulness, to remember that relief and com-

fort can come only through a revelation of Jesus Christ as having borne our sins and made atonement for them by one offering, and as having thus perfected forever them that are sanctified. It seems so impossible to remember that we cannot cleanse ourselves from any sin. We can only suffer, and sorrow, and become broken-hearted, and confess our sins, which we do because we can no more help it than a man wounded and half dead can help groaning. But what a sweet surprise awaits us then, always a surprise, when we find that the broken heart and the humble confession are all that was needed, and that it is now made known to us, and felt in our souls, that Jesus has forgiven our sins in justice and faithfulness, and has cleansed us from all unrighteousness, and that it is not as having become good and meritorious that we come again into the felt favor of God, but as poor, vile, humble, repenting sinners, who are brought to see again the infinite depths and breadths of the mercy and grace and love of God, which are in Christ. Then to us the word comes with new power, and we can join with the psalmist in saying, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."—Psalms xxxii. 1, 2. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."—1 John i. 9. Jesus is always brought to our view as the faithful and just one, in whom are all spiritual blessings, and in whom there is no guile.

March, 1912.

WORDS REMEMBERED

During the last two or three days that my dear wife, Clarice, was with us she could speak only with great difficulty on account of shortness of breath, yet many precious words concerning her spiritual exercises fell from her lips, which I would like to recall. I will repeat a few of them. She could sometimes speak easily and distinctly for a sentence or two, then her voice would fall to a whisper and she would utter a sentence slowly, word by word.

"I thought it could not be possible for one to sin so much while lying on a sick bed. I am not thinking of daily transgressions, or of sins against people even in thought, but I am thinking of sins against the Lord; I am thinking of how infinitely holy he is, and I so vile, and yet I dare to rush into his holy presence with my little, trifling affairs, and to claim his attention to my poor, selfish thoughts. I fear at times that it must be presumption in me, and irreverence."

"'And cleanses us from all unrighteousness.' What a wonderful thing that is, to be cleansed, to be made absolutely free from sin, to become pure and clean and holy. Infinite power and grace only could accomplish such a wonder. 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.' It took nothing less than the infinite power of the eternal God to make the sacrifice of Christ effectual, to make recon-

ciliation for sin to cleanse a sinner from all sin and make him pure and holy. I have often been driven away from the Lord by the thought of his infinite power and greatness and the feeling of my own great sinfulness, yet I have been rebuked for that feeling; I have known that what I truly wanted was to go nearer to him, not away from him."

"The friends are just as good and kind as they can be. I know that I do not possess the good qualities which they think they have seen in me, but they minister to what they think I possess. I am so unworthy, but their acts of kindness are given me in the name of a disciple, and so I suppose I may take them."

"When one gets so very weak physically as I am it is impossible to make any exertion to say anything. We can think of the pleasant intercourse we have had in the past, but we cannot talk it over now. We must be content to remember the conversations we have had."

"When I was talking this morning I was not thinking of the things I had done but of the things I had not done. I know the brethren think I have done the good things they speak of, but they must be mistaken. I cannot see any good thing in me, and it seems as though I must have been hypocritical to make them think so."

I said, "Is it not sweet and lovely to think how all your many friends feel that you have been good and kind, and have given many a cup of cold water to thirsty souls? You have to take the testimony of those who have received the cup at your hands. Those who give the cup may forget it, but the one to whom it is given never will." "Yes," she replied tenderly and with much feeling, "I suppose I may take the testimony of the dear brethren; they have seen my desire, and have recognized that which I desired to do." To our daughter, Mildred, she said, "I do not know what I should have done if it had not been for the words in 1 John i. 9: 'If we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' It has stayed with me, and I want you to know that I have had many blissful moments from that passage of Scripture."

I have never known one more keenly sensitive to sin, nor one more impressed with the solemn truth that all sin is against God. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned." Her view of the infinite holiness of God, and of all the attributes of his character was wonderful, and this seemed to show her by contrast the terrible nature of sin. How carefully and jealously she scanned and scrutinized everything that was presented to her mind as an evidence of an experience of grace. She feared to take anything as in her favor, unless it was clearly given to her through the dear Savior. She was dear to me beyond expression as my loving, faithful and devoted wife. I think I may truthfully say she was infinitely more dear to me, and I to her, as "heirs together of the grace of [spiritual] life."

JULY 30, 1912.

HEBREWS X. 26-31

One who sees himself a justly condemned sinner in the sight of a holy God will try to put away his sins and to become righteous, but he will try in vain. In the Lord's own appointed time he will reveal Jesus to this man, as he does to every convicted sinner, as having died for him and put away his sins by the sacrifice of himself. This truth always comes to the sinner as a surprise; it is never expected, it always comes as something new and wonderful. Now they experience the new covenant without knowing at the time what it means, any more than a child understands what it is doing when it takes its food. "I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." —Heb. x. 16, 17. This one now has received the knowledge of the truth. The sins that burdened his soul have been forgiven, and will burden him no more with condemnation, though the remembrance of them will keep him humble and cause him to desire to walk softly before the Lord all his days. But now this one is "under law to Christ," and by the power of the law which is written, not on tables of stone, but by the Spirit of the living God in the fleshy tables of the heart (2 Cor. iii. 3,) he feels from day to day the sinfulness of this old nature, so that he has to say, "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." Here, it seems, is the experience of the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. (Phil. iii. 10.) The more nearly we are enabled to walk with God, and the more clearly we are given to know the power of the resurrection of Christ, the more acutely will we feel this depravity of the flesh. It is likely that there never was one child of God who did not feel more or less of this sinfulness in heart or word or deed, causing him to feel at times the supplicating prayer of the publican, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The dear Savior graciously remembered this when he put this sentence into the prayer which he taught his disciples: "Forgive us our sins." Can such a man sin wilfully? He, looking into his own heart and life, has to say in all honesty, "The sins of one most righteous day might sink me in despair," yet he is walking in Christ by faith. He realizes that he cannot take one step in his own strength or in his own name; he feels day by day that Christ is his life, that he cannot walk one step in holiness except by faith in Christ, and in the good works, which God before ordained that his people should walk in. (Eph. ii. 10.) Can this man sin in such a way as that his sin should be called a wilful sin? The apostle here says something that sounds like it: "If we sin wilfully." He did not say, If we should sin wilfully, but, if we do. John speaks of a sin unto death. Under Moses' law there were sins unto death, which meant a death of the body. But those of whom John and Paul are speaking are not under that law of sin and death. (Romans viii.) These have been born again, and have the law of Christ written in the new heart. Of course their transgressions are against no law that they are not under. It is against the law written

in their hearts that they transgress; against the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ; against his commands. Is there a transgression that may be committed by a living soul which will bring upon him punishment, while other sins are not punished? Are there distinctions between different sins of the Lord's people? The Father says of the Son, "If his children forsake my law, * * * then will I visit their transgression with the rod."—Psalms lxxxix. The Lord says, "You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."—Amos iii. 2. Paul commands concerning one transgressor that the church should deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Cor. v. 4, 5.) Afterward he speaks of this as a punishment, and directs that the one who was punished shall be restored to their fellowship and love. (2 Cor. ii. 6-11.) Again, he speaks of delivering two unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme. (1 Tim. i. 20.) If evil thoughts and selfish lusts and desires for revenge are in my heart and mind, and they are suppressed by me through the power of the Spirit, and no word or deed of expression follow, I will feel a deep sorrow and be greatly abased before God, but there is no call for punishment; but if I give expression to that sinful thought and desire, then its character is somewhat changed, as all that hear or know of it are somewhat involved. If I covet, I am a sinner before God, but it is before him and him only, and if I feel a hatred of myself for that sinful desire my cry unto God will be heard; if, however, my covetous desire has led me to do a wrong, then comes something more. If my envious or jealous feeling has been expressed in word or deed against any one, then punishment must follow. It is the Lord only who can punish, and this punishment is a most solemn thing. The church cannot punish; the church does, or should do, what the King and his princes, the apostles, direct. The punishment is by the dear Savior himself, and it is never in anger, but always in infinite love and tender compassion. God is not mocked. "What a man [of God] sows that shall he also reap." When the evil thought or covetous desire was expressed in word or act, then the transgressor was sowing. If he sows to the flesh he will have a sad harvest of corruption to reap. If he keep under his body, and keep utterly to himself that corrupt desire, by the power of the Spirit, and, looking unto the Lord for help, he sows spiritual good wishes and love for his brother, it will be his blessed privilege to reap some of the special joys of life everlasting.

Job's friends thought the Lord was punishing him for some hidden wickedness, by taking away his wealth and destroying his children, but they did not understand his case. He asserted his integrity in regard to all the charges of guilt which their carnal minds brought against him, at the same time that he was bemoaning his sinfulness and corruption in the sight of a holy God. The loss of worldly wealth and treasures and personal affliction, and pain of body or mind,

are no indication that one is under the wrath and punishment of a holy God; on the contrary, the one whom the Lord is visiting with stripes because of his iniquities may find his worldly condition improved, but leanness of a most terrible kind sent into his soul. (Psalms cvi. 15.) The natural man knows nothing of this leanness, knows nothing of either spiritual joy or sorrow. The one who commits a sinful act knows that it is sinful. His conscience, which the Lord has made good and tender, tells him that what he is doing is wrong; he knows he is seeking in this way to gratify some evil propensity or fleshly lust. The apostle does not seem to be talking of a worldly man who is trying to deceive the church, and who feels no such thing as godly sorrow for sin, but he is referring to the Lord's people, saying, "The Lord shall judge his people," and this seems to me to be the same characters (his people) referred to in all this chapter and connection.

It may be that one has, for no good reason, forsaken the assembling of himself together with the church. The apostle seems to refer to this as a transgression of a most important kind. To disobey any commandment of Jesus is to trample him who gave the commandment under foot, to count the blood of the covenant wherewith he was sanctified an unholy thing, and to do despite to the Spirit of grace. These are strong expressions, but they can be spoken only of a child of God, for only a child of God has ever been sanctified by the blood of the covenant. This transgressor has known that Jesus atoned for the sins of all his people when he died. Now he is to feel the infinite importance of this truth, when he feels himself left without hope, as he says again and again to himself, "There remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." He cannot get the assurance that he is in this covenant of grace until the Lord shall have fully judged him and shown to him the holiness of his judgments. He is separated from the sweet comforts of the gospel, from the precious experiences of gospel fellowship. Now he feels a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries. These adversaries are all the evil propensities of the flesh; they must be devoured, destroyed. We have done the will of the flesh in turning from the sweet commandments which were delivered unto us, and now we feel the sad consequences. The apostles have told us urgently and tenderly to avoid the evil, not to live after the flesh, for if we do we shall die. "Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men," telling the men of God not to fulfill the lusts of the flesh. Now this death is upon us; not the death of the body, not death in sin, but death to the joy and power of spiritual things. No power in prayer, no answer to prayer, no comfort of love, none of that gladness which once filled the soul, even in the midst of affliction. Only a living soul can experience this kind of death. A worldly man is dead in sin and cannot experience this death, which is a separation from the blessings of the gospel that the natural man does not understand.

Should I meet one who is suffering this, which he feels to be a just punishment for some transgression, and who does not think that he can ever be forgiven, I could not say to him, "You sinned wilfully, and now you have no ground for hope, because there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." I could not say that; I would have to say to him, "You sinned wilfully, as you acknowledge, and your punishment, as you feel it to be, is just; but your sorrow and heart-brokenness are evidence to me that you a child of God. You can do nothing to atone for your sins, but your sins were all atoned for by the dear Savior, and in his own good time he will reveal this to you and give you forgiveness for all your sins, as he has already given you repentance. It is a fearful thing, but also a most blessed thing, that you have fallen into the hands of the living God, as your Judge, who will judge his people, and who has declared this unfailing judgment: 'Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted;' and who directed one of his apostles to say: 'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness;' and who moved one of the holy men of old to say for our comfort now: 'I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause.' 'He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness.'" The judgment and fiery indignation which this man, who has sinned wilfully, moved by the will of his carnal mind, so fearfully looks for, will devour the adversaries—not the man, but the adversaries of the man which war against his soul (1 Peter ii. 11; James iv. 1,) seeking to destroy his hope and his comfort. The carnal mind and heart are full of them, they are "the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life."—1 John ii. 16. These adversaries caused the man to sin, caused his downfall. They would, if it were possible, destroy the child of God himself, but that they cannot do, for Jesus has prayed for every one of them that their faith fail not. But these adversaries shall themselves be devoured. The poor sinner shall see them to be lying vanities (Jonah ii. 8,) shall see them as nothing, as of the world, as passing away; shall see in the Lord's own time and way that this punishment, so sorely suffered, has been for the destruction of the flesh, that through mercy the spirit might be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Cor. v. 5; 2 Cor. ii. 6-11.) This punishment is sorer than that of the one who transgressed Moses' law, as the things of the new covenant are higher, more holy and more desirable to the spiritual mind than the things of the old covenant, as the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus is higher and more glorious than the law of sin and death, from which it has made us free. (Romans viii. 2.) He who has suffered or who is suffering this punishment can never tell it; it is terrible, beyond his power to describe. But the deliverance from this suffering shall surely come to every wandering sheep, and the dark and terrible night of sorrow shall be followed by the morning of eternal and unfading joy.

OCTOBER, 1912.

TODAY

"And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, Today shalt thou be with me in paradise." Here is a "today" that can never have a tomorrow; a "today" that rises above all time, above all that ever has transpired or that ever shall transpire in time, and which comprehends all the unfathomable depths and all the unapproachable heights and all the infinite extent of eternity. This "today" rises in its boundless character above all the terrible scenes then taking place on Calvary. To our natural understanding this answer of the dear Savior to the dying thief would include merely the portion of time from the moment they were spoken until the going down of the sun, or until midnight. This is the ordinary meaning of the word "today." But immediately after these wonderful words were spoken, Jesus died; and then that day's sun went down, and another day passed by, and the morning of à third day began, and on the morning of that third day Jesus arose from the dead, and then forty days of time passed by after his resurrection, when he ascended up on high as the King of glory, and forever sat down on the right hand of God.

But the words spoken to the dying thief must have been fulfilled. We can never understand by mortal intelligence the glorious mysteries involved in this most wonderful subject, but we must know that from the moment of the death of Jesus and the death of the thief they were both in paradise.

"And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." That heaven of eternal glory, the eternal dwelling-place of God, has never ceased to be full of the radiance of the Sun of Righteousness, and never will. While the eternal Son of God went down to the lowest hell, in his sufferings for the sins of his people, that glorious heaven, the eternal abode of God, was never dimmed by a shade of darkness. Its infinite glory has never failed in the least degree. The Father, and the Son which is in the bosom of the Father, are the light and glory of it. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."—Isaiah lvii. 15.

No change of place or of time with him. He was with Abel when he slew the lamb. Abraham saw his day and was glad when he laid the ram in the place of his son upon the altar. He is with every one who worships, no matter how far apart they are in space or in time. "Today," he said to the dying thief, although he must die on that day of Jewish time, and must lie in the grave three days, and must rise again, and must be seen forty days of witnesses chosen before, and then ascend up to glory; yet "today," he said, "shalt thou be with me in paradise."

As the eternal Son of God he could not die. He came in the flesh that he might die. He took part of flesh and blood, that he might

taste of death for every one of the many sons whom he, as the Captain of their salvation, was sent to bring to glory. He was here in time to redeem those sons from sin and death, and yet to him a thousand years are, and ever were, as one day, and one day as a thousand years, and he could say, "Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."

November, 1912.

FRAGMENTS

What a wonderful word is Love; how deep, how broad, how full of sacred meaning, how infinitely comprehensive, and yet inexpressible. In the New Testament it is dwelt upon by all of the inspired writers with great variety, and yet every one who has felt its sweet and holy power and blessedness will seek some new form of words in which to tell of its wonders.

The apostle John says: "Perfect love casteth out fear." These words were given to me once, I must believe, with divine power; they lived in my soul many days, and I lived in them, it seems to me, though that is much for me to claim.

Paul, speaking of the abiding power and enduring quality of the love of God which is in Christ Jesus, names sixteen things which cannot separate us from that love, and then includes every "other creature" in that wonderful list, thus assuring the absolute security of all who have ever known that love (Romans xxxv. 39,) and yet those who have surely felt that dear love in their hearts will give place to doubts and fears, and say:

"'Tis a point I long to know,
(Oft it causes anxious thought,)
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

In another place this same apostle, expressing to his brethren at Ephesus his desire and prayer for them that they may know the love of God, tells some wonderful things concerning that love and those in whom it dwells. First, he bows his knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ in prayer for them, that they may know this love; this knowledge I understand being a daily vital experience of its blessed power.

Second, he expresses the truth that part of the family of God are in heaven and part on earth, and that all of them in heaven and earth are named of Jesus Christ.

Third, his prayer shows that all the living children of God in earth, in order to know this love, must be strengthened, according to the riches of Christ's glory, with might by the Spirit in the inner man, and that Christ must dwell in them by faith.

Fourth, those in whom this infinitely blessed grace of the Spirit shall be felt and manifested must be rooted and grounded in love, sending their roots, as a plant or a tree, down into the sacred soil of

love, and grounded like a pillar standing firmly upon the solid Rock, upholding the order of God's house.

Fifth, all saints have a measure of this comprehension, which includes and embraces the breadth and length and depth and height of this boundless and incomprehensible love.

Sixth, still a greater wonder; to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge; to know what cannot be known. The mortal powers of the wisest man cannot know this love, but to the babe in Christ the knowledge comes without effort, as the breath of spiritual life. The love of Christ passes all human knowledge, the natural heart cannot know it. It is not the love of man, but the love of God, which is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. We feel to be so vile, so unholy, that we cannot be a fit dwelling-place for that holy principle. But sunshine may fall into a polluted atmosphere, and it cannot be polluted; it may fall upon a heap of corruption, but it will not be corrupted or stained.

Seventh, and the last and best, is that to know that love of God as it is here so wonderfully presented is to be filled with all the fullness of God. This is beyond my power to comprehend, or even to think, yet I do love the sweet truth so wonderfully presented. O that I may be given more ability to comprehend this wonderful love, and to feel some little measure of the fullness of God. Love is the deepest, broadest, most glorious thing within the range of thought, and yet nothing is so easy and so sweet to do, or rather to experience. "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us." God is love, and he that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. May that love be more felt in our hearts, and go out in word and act to all the family of God.

THERE comes a time in the experience of a child of God when the enormity of his sins in the sight of men is lost sight of in the more terrible enormity in which they appear in the sight of God; when any injury done to men by his transgressions, though unspeakably great, and its just punishment fearful, is in a manner swallowed up in the greater dimensions it assumes as we see it in the sight of God, who is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." In that state of mind we are constrained to say: "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight."

Now we are fearfully alone with our sins before God, who is our Judge. No excusing ourselves now, no comparing ourselves with others, and our transgressions with theirs as less enormous; no telling ourselves, others have done worse; no place for self-pity. A just God is our Judge.

This is indeed being alone with our sins and transgressions before that holy God. He has set our sins in the light of his countenance, our iniquities are ever before us. And can we see Jesus now? Can we have hope that there is a possible way in which he can come to our

help? He was terribly alone in the garden of Gethsemane, with all of the sins of his people upon him in all their bitterness and guilt, and no man, not even his three dear disciples, with him. In view of that awful scene how can a poor, guilty sinner ever complain of loneliness, and pain, and agony, and separation from men, and desertion by them all? And how terribly alone he was upon the cross, not able to understand in that awful hour why the Father had forsaken him.

Through such terrible loneliness and anguish he comes to his people as their Redeemer, having borne their sins, with all their guilt and shame, and as having been buried by baptism into death for them, and thus washed their sins away, and opened a channel of mercy for poor sinners, and brought to their knowledge and experience the blessed truth that where sin abounds grace does much more abound. And this is my hope, that this Jesus, who is my Judge, my Lawgiver and my King, has come into my poor soul, and still comes from time to time in my experience. And is this my hope today, that Jesus, who came to me nearly fifty years ago, is truly mine, and that he who is my hope has given me everlasting consolation and good hope through grace? And is it for the confirmation of my hope that I am left alone from time to time with my sins and sinfulness, causing me to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and to ask and beg the Lord to show me a token for good, and to say unto my soul, I am thy salvation?

How precious is this doctrine of salvation by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ through unspeakable mercy, when it comes to us, not in the letter merely, but dropping like the rain upon the thirsty soil of our hearts, and distilling like the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb and as showers upon the grass, because the name of the Lord is published as having done all this glorious work.

On the fifth day of January I was eighty years of age. What a wonderful thing that seems to me. Many people have lived to that age, and beyond, and I have not thought that very wonderful, but now that it has come my turn to know that age I am taken by surprise, and my mind dwells upon it with especial attention and wonder. No particular change is noted from the day before, nor in the days that are following. Some who are much younger than I are more feeble, and others who have seen more years are stronger. I have reason to be thankful for the health I enjoy, and for my ability to walk and work. But to be fourscore, to be eighty; how very old that has always seemed to me. The prayer of Moses alludes to the age of man, and says that if one gets to be fourscore years it is by reason of strength. It is good to feel that strength, and I can but be thankful for it, though we know it is very near the end of our mortal journey. But the prayer of Moses declares that this strength, by reason of which the days of our years have become fourscore, "is labor and sorrow." This is the condition of the Lord's people while under the

law. Their days while condemned by the law "are passed away in God's wrath;" they are "labor and sorrow." They labor to fulfill the law and to obtain righteousness by their works, yet sorrow is the result. Their works cannot bring them the righteousness they need, but leave them in sorrow. Work in this world is followed by success and gladness. One works to build himself a house, and succeeds. If he dies, another takes up the work and the house is built; but in this work to satisfy the law, sorrow is the result; even though a man live a hundred years, yet his work of this kind is followed by sorrow.

How good to realize that this prayer of Moses concludes with a supplication for gospel blessings in the work of Jesus; "Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children." Thus the beauty of the Lord comes upon us through the glorious, finished work of Jesus. Then the natural age disappears, and we return to the days of our youth, and our flesh is fresher than a child's. Then the work of our hands is established upon us, and we find the church, where these gospel blessings are realized, to be "the perfection of beauty," for out of her God hath shined. (Psalms xc.)

GOLD

Gold was mentioned in the Bible very early, before the woman was made, and the place where it existed, and its character. "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden; and from thence it was parted, and became into four heads. The name of the first is Pison: that is it which compasseth the whole land of Havilah, where there is gold; and the gold of that land is good." How long that gold had been known to be there, and had been sought after, we are not told. Why the place of its existence was mentioned so early, before there was society to need and seek it, and why the inspired writer mentioned that it was good, has often excited inquiry in my mind. It is evident that the peculiar qualities of gold which make it the most precious of metals, were very early known. It is the heaviest of all substances, is soft, very malleable and ductile, and is quite unalterable by heat, by moisture or by most corrosive agents.

We find that gold is used by inspired writers as representing the faith of God's elect. The apostle Peter writes to the brethren of the heaviness through manifold temptations that may come upon them, "if need be," "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ."—1 Peter i. 7. Thus that most precious of all metals is mentioned first of all substances, in order that it may represent that faith without which it is impossible to please God, and which must be present in every exercise of the soul that can be truly called the worship of the true and living God, from Adam down to the last vessel of mercy who shall rise from earth to glory.

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." By faith we are justified (Rom. iii. 28; v. 1; Gal. ii. 16; iii. 24; Titus iii. 7;) by faith we walk, not by sight; by faith we live; by faith our hearts are purified; by faith we stand; by faith all manner of wonderful things are done by the Lord's people, as recorded in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews and elsewhere throughout the inspired Scriptures of truth. By this wonderful power or principle, spiritual things are received and known. It is the sight and hearing and feeling of the spiritual life. It is the evidence that we have spiritual life, and the substance of things belonging to that life, which we who are in the body hope for.

Gold is tried in order to assure those who have been given the gold that it is real. For the devil is always trying to disturb and harass the people of God with doubts and fears as to the reality of their faith. So the faith is tried by fire, or by some other temptation. The fire will destroy everything else, but the gold will stand the test and will come out of the fire unharmed. The Lord says: "I will bring the third part through the fire, and I will refine them as silver is refined, and I will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people, and they shall say, The Lord is my God."—Zech. xiii. 9. The silver needs refining, but the gold only needs to be tried. The strokes of affliction are hard and painful as they fall upon the Lord's afflicted and poor people; the bitterness of their souls is hard to bear; the heat of the furnace they fear will consume them, but the faith with which they went into the fire is not injured in the least, while all that was false is consumed.

The heavy stroke that would destroy the false material, that would break to pieces the bdellium and the onyx stone, which are gems mentioned as being in the same place as the gold, only render the gold more desirable, more valuable, ready for use. Many most important things used in making the tabernacle, and in making the things used there, were made of "beaten gold" and "wreathed gold." The cherubim and the candlesticks and other things were beaten gold. Heavy strokes were necessary in making the thin sheets of gold used to cover much of the woodwork in the temple. No metal can be beaten to a greater thinness to be used in the delicate work. But we do not read of anything being gold-washed.

It is said in referring to the land of Havilah, where there is gold: "And the gold of that land is good." I do not suppose that this implies that there was gold that was not good. Of all that the Lord made he said that it was good, not meaning to say that some things were not good. But in regard to this there seems a reason why this gold is said to be good. I think of this land of Havilah as the gospel land, and this gold as there in the beginning of the mainfestation of spiritual things, to show the infallible character of the faith of the Lord's people. We can say of faith that it is good it will never fail. So it is said, "The gold of that land is good." In every respect it is

suitable, the very thing that is needed to show the absolute perfection of everything pertaining to the character and work of God so far as it is revealed to men.

Peter says that the trial of our faith is much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire. Though the gold will stand the trial by fire, yet it will perish some time, but the faith of God's elect will never perish; it will last to the end of time, when it will be needed no more.

The faith by which we see the church, and all spiritual things, is referred to as gold. The new Jerusalem, which John saw by faith, was pure gold, like unto clear glass. No mortal eye could see it. The street of the city was pure gold, as it were, transparent glass. This street is Christ. "I am the way," he said. His people walk in him. In all that great city there is only one street, only one way, which is Jesus. By faith alone can that street be seen. The clearest, most powerful and far-reaching sight of the strongest and wisest man can never discern it, nor can any one, even with the strength of the lion, enter into that street. "The redeemed shall walk there. And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

The faith by which that street is seen and walked in is called gold, and so the street is "pure gold, as it were transparent glass." The gold of that gospel land is good; it comes down from God out of heaven.

FEBRUARY, 1913.

PSALM CXXXIX

"O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me." Thus this wonderful Psalm begins with the solemn declaration of the psalmist that he has been searched and known by the Lord, and closes with the earnest supplication that he may be searched and known. So in the beginning of every experience of grace the searching power of God is felt by the poor soul, who is thus made to know God as infinitely holy, and to know himself as sinful and justly condemned; and to the last of each experience of grace the infinite value of this searching power of the Lord is felt more and more, and the sweet and sacred words with which the Psalm begins are turned into the form of a humble supplication at its close: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." This searching by the power of the Holy Spirit causes a knowledge on the part of the quickened sinner which can be obtained in no other way. It is to him that the knowledge comes, not to the Lord. There can be no increase or decrease of knowledge on the part of the Lord; he knows all things eternally. But when the heart is searched by his Holy Spirit, and the thoughts of the heart made known, it is to the sinner that the

increase of knowledge comes. We now learn what Adam learned in the garden of Eden, that we cannot be hidden from the Lord. It is an intimate, vital knowledge that comes to us through this searching of our hearts by the Lord. We now know of ourselves what he knew all the time, that we are naked, that we have no righteousness to clothe us with. Whenever this searching power is in exercise in us wonderful things are seen by us down in the depths of the soul. The Lord knew of them all the time, but we did not. This searching brought them to our knowledge, and as we see them we cry out in wonder: "O Lord, thou hast searched me, and known me."

"Thou knowest my downsitting and mine uprising." This expression is the beginning of a recital of particulars in an active soul, deeply exercised, which is the most wonderful and comprehensive anywhere to be found. Every movement, every act, every fear or apprehension, every form of expression, every thought, every word, every emotion, all are here brought to our observation as the result of this peculiar searching. The downsitting comes first in this remarkable recital of conditions, activities and forms, as comprehending the state of quietude, before work is entered upon, and also the retiring from work already begun, in order to rest, while the uprising would indicate the emotions that start one into activity, whether to resume work or to enter upon new enterprises. The two expressions are necessary to each other, the downsitting and the uprising both together showing the disturbed condition of the mind when spiritual life is first experienced and brought into exercise, and the thoughts are restlessly moving to and fro, under the searching power of God, when we are brought first into his holy presence.

"Thou understandest my thought afar off." Here is a power in the Lord beyond compare, recognized by the psalmist. There are those who profess to understand the thoughts of others who are in their presence, but I never have known one who claimed to understand the thoughts of those who are far off, out of their sight. Here is One who understands the thoughts of those who are far away from him. No skill is used here to find out what the thought of the person is; no necromancy; the mind of the one whose thought is read by the Lord is searched as easily, and the thought is seen as clearly, as though it were set in the light of the sun. To the one who is being searched, the Lord appears to be very far off from such a sinner as he appears to himself to be. He cannot understand his own thought, even though he put forth all the power of his mind upon it. It is always a wonderful day with him when he discovers that the Lord understands his thought, though it may be no comfort to him at the time, the time of comfort not having come for him yet. But the thought itself is afar off. So far as distance in space is concerned a thought can go as easily and as quickly a thousand miles as into the next room. But here is distance in time as well as in space. It is our thought tomorrow, or next year; with him who understands our thought afar off, a

thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years. He understands the thought that will be in the mind of one tomorrow or next year. Hazael was astonished beyond measure when Elisha told him what thoughts would be in his mind at a future time, and said with honest indignation: "Is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" But the Lord understood his thought afar off, and told Elisha what Hazael would do in the future. (2 Kings viii. 13.)

What a wonderful and mysterious thing is thought; how impossible to understand. What is thought? Who can fully define it? Who can understand his own thought? Whence does it come, and where does it go? A thought may take hold on eternity, and yet a word, a look, may startle it apparently out of existence. But that which is so mysterious, so unexplainable to us, is clear and plain to the Lord. "Thou understandest my thought afar off." The Lord understands us, but we cannot understand him, except by the special revelation of his Holy Spirit, for his thoughts are as far above our thoughts as the heavens are higher than the earth. "It is beyond a creature's mind to glance a thought halfway to God." But when the dear Lord is pleased to give us a view of his thoughts, then our minds are quieted, and made to rest, and are filled with comfort and joy. We had felt sure that the Lord's thoughts concerning us were that we should be cast out of his sight, because of our transgressions; but the Lord said: "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."—Jer. xxix. 11. Then we can say with praise and joy: "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them! If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand: when I awake, I am still with thee."

"Thou compassest my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways." In this very unusual and striking form of language the felt presence of the Lord in all our experiences and movements and concerns is expressed, and his watchful observation of all our purposes. Not only is the path we are traveling, whether in body or mind, known to the Lord to its very end, so as to be truly compassed by his presence and power, but every time and place of resting, every relaxation of effort, whether because of fatigue or discouragement, every lying down, from whatever cause, is so fully and absolutely known to him that we are assured he is acquainted with all our ways. What wonderful, searching power is here. Why these minute particulars, entering into the mysterious depths of the soul, and noticing every thought of the mind and every movement of the body? Perhaps we shall see as our meditations go on, some presentation of the church in her eternal relationship with Christ, and as she is manifested by his divine power as one with him. Then we may see why the psalmist declares: "For there is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." The eternal unity of Christ and

the church must be thus manifested in the experience of the Lord's people. He is her life, and when that life is given to them this unity must appear in the peculiar and wonderful manner expressed in the portion of this Psalm I am considering. By inspiration David is telling his own experience of the Lord's knowledge of his inmost thoughts and feelings, and is thus telling the experience of all the church of God. The word which is in David's heart and tongue is the same Word which was in the beginning with God, and which was made flesh and dwelt among men. So in the prayer of faith by the poorest of sinners the word that expresses his desire after the love and righteousness of God are known unto God, for it came from him. This word which is in the tongue of the psalmist is a word of supplication, and shows him to be in the embrace of the God of salvation, as is expressed in the next sentence.

"Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me." This is the standing still place. No moving forward now to struggle and urge our powers to obtain some needed advantage; no turning back to correct some mistake, or try some new effort. Both the past and the future are barred against us. But we are quiet now, not disturbed and restless, for the Lord's hand is laid upon us and all is quiet; what we want is here. The Lord's hand resting upon us gives quietness and peace. The Word we sought is nigh us, even in our heart and in our mouth. Righteousness is in that Word, and that is what we hungered for. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever." But all this is wonderful; we cannot understand the work going on within our souls. No wonder the psalmist cries out in astonishment: "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." The way of life and salvation is beyond the power of the greatest mind of man to understand, though a little child can feel it and rejoice in it. The greatest prophets could not understand the mysteries which they were inspired to declare. They desired and searched diligently to know "what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify," but the knowledge was not given them, and the wonderful knowledge of spiritual mysteries is hidden from the wise and prudent today. The natural mind of the child of God cannot understand the wonderful workings of divine life in his own soul. Such knowledge is too wonderful for him, it is high, he cannot attain unto it. It seems too wonderful a work for me to undertake to write upon this most remarkable Psalm. It has been much upon my mind, but I have long hesitated to write, because I am too weak and ignorant and altogether insufficient for such an undertaking.

"Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" Thus the same subject is continued, the infinitely far-reaching and all-pervading presence and power and knowledge of the Lord. I do not understand this as expressing a desire to get away,

as in another place the wish is expressed for wings like a dove, in order to fly away and be at rest. The searching is still going on, and the boundless presence and power of the Lord are still experienced and illustrated and declared. No place or condition can be found or imagined where the Lord is not. The mind cannot conceive of a hiding-place from him, nor can the divine life of the church desire it.

"If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." If one should desire and undertake to flee from the presence and Spirit of the Lord it would hardly seem that he would expect to succeed by going up into heaven. But that glorious dwelling-place of God must be visited by one who would be a competent witness that God is there. Paul was there, whether in the body or out of the body we do not know, for he did not know, but he was in Christ. Only in Christ could he or any other ascend up into heaven. The church and Christ are joined together, and they can never be put asunder. Wherever he is, there she must be; she cannot get away from him. Even though she made her bed in hell, by transgression, behold, he is there. It is not as a theory, or by tradition, that the church, or that any man, can know and testify that the Lord is in hell. No natural man can know of the Lord being there; it must be learned, with all other spiritual truth, by experience. It is only the one who can say, I made my bed in hell, who can say as a true witness, "Behold, thou [the Lord] art there." Every one who has felt the pains of hell get hold upon him, and has had to lie down in sorrow, will at some time be made to rejoice in the knowledge that Jesus went down to the lowest hell for the salvation of all such. (Psalms lxxxvi. 13.)

"If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." "The wings of the morning!" What a wonderful expression! What a swiftly moving power, filled with light and shining with brightness, moving with the rapidity of thought and carrying us over infinite space in a moment of time; carrying us upon those infinite, shining wings, beyond the reach of imagination, to the uttermost part of some distant sea, utterly desolate. Surely here, if anywhere within the utmost reach of thought we should find loneliness. Surely no being can dwell here, and, in the uttermost part of the sea, we shall be alone. But even in this nameless, unimaginable point of space, the Lord's hand shall lead us, and his right hand shall hold us. And so, in language most wonderful, in imagery most transcendent and sublime, the Lord gives assurance that the quickened sinner, the church of the living God, the bride of Christ, can never be lost, can never get away beyond the reach of his divine presence and protecting power.

"If I say, Surely the darkness shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me." Now the darkness is scrutinized to find if it can furnish a hiding-place from the Lord. Cannot the darkness cover one

out of sight? No, "even the night shall be light about me." How wonderfully plastic language becomes, when used by the power of the Holy Spirit to set forth the wonders of spiritual truth. The same infinitely wise God who called the darkness night in the morning of creation, now says that the night shall be light about the people of God, if they should seek a hiding-place from his presence. "Yea, the darkness hideth not from thee: but the night shineth as the day." No darkness in the presence of the Lord; "There shall be no night there." The night has become as an infinite center and source of light, and shineth as the day. "The darkness and the light are both alike to thee."

"For thou hast possessed my reins; thou hast covered me in my mother's womb." How sweet it is when the mind is made to contemplate the power and providence of God in behalf of poor sinners; when the present of our life is so wonderfully filled with the goodness of the Lord, and with a sense of his protecting care over us, that our mind goes back to the beginning, to see with wonder that his dear guarding hand was over us then, even before we were born, and that we were even then the favored subjects of his preserving care. The contemplation of such distinguishing mercy and care awakens in the heart a feeling of praise.

"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made." "All thy works shall praise thee." When we tell of his wonderful works we are praising him. If we could find one thing lacking, or one thing erroneous in all his works, or one thing existing contrary to his purpose, to that extent his praise would be lacking; yes, there would be no praise to him if even in one point his will were not accomplished. But praise is perfected even out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, for every babe in Christ shall know that the prayer taught him by the dear Savior shall be fully answered: "Thy will be done."

"For I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well." This can truly be said of this living, earthy body of ours. The more we learn of its intricate mechanism and mysterious workings, the more marvelous does it all appear. When we see even a little of the mutual relationship of its various parts, and their dependence upon each other, we can see the just use of the word "fearfully" as well as of the word "wonderfully." Truly we are fearfully and wonderfully made.

"Our life contains a thousand springs,
And dies if one be gone;
Strange that a harp of thousand strings
Should keep in tune so long."

But something more fearful and wonderful and marvelous than this natural body of ours is spoken of here by the psalmist. David, being a prophet (Acts ii. 30,) spake here of the wonderful and mysterious body of Christ, that spiritual body, "the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."—Eph. i. 23. As a man,

David is speaking of this body which was formed of the dust of the ground, and of his experiences and exercises as a man, but as a prophet, inspired by the Holy Spirit, David is speaking of Adam as "the figure of him that was to come," even Christ. He is the one who is so fearfully and wonderfully made. He is the marvelous workmanship of God, who inspires such admiration in the hearts of his people, when their souls are filled with the knowledge of him who filleth all in all. It is a solemn awe and a holy joy that comes into their souls with that knowledge of his marvelous works. This body of Jesus is seen only in such measure as faith is given to behold it. It is Adam manifested as one with his wife, who can never be separate and distinct from him. Wherever she is, there he is seen by faith to be, and his love has never been separated from her. It is a glorious sight for faith when she is seen as a poor, deserted and desolate woman, to whom he comes with holy and faithful promises of deliverance and eternal joy in his presence. Shall we say it is any more glorious when from the great and high mountain of God's holiness she is seen by faith as a glorious city, immeasurable in extent, perfect in her adornments as the workmanship of God, made all of gold, shining as the sun?

"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth." The church is speaking to Christ, the body to him who is Head over all things to the church, the wife of the husband. This substance is the heavenly body. The margin reads, "strength or body," Christ and his bride. He was her strength or power or substance before the world began, but is now made manifest by appearing in the flesh and abolishing death. (2 Tim. i. 10, 11.) He was made manifest as the salvation of his people by coming in their flesh and taking their sins upon him, and by his death abolishing death. They must have been his before they fell in Adam, or he could not have redeemed them. No one can redeem anything which was not his before it needed redemption. So reference is made here, I think, to the secret working of the law in the consciences of the Lord's people when they are experimentally "in the lowest parts of the earth." It is in secret, not in the sight of men, that this work of God's grace goes on, and they are made to be manifest as his people in their experience, and so are curiously wrought and created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them.

It does indeed appear to every such laboring and heavy laden soul as though he were lower down in the earth than anybody else ever was. But now faith has done wonders, faith has saved them, and the poor soul is made to know the mysterious power of grace, and can see the truth of salvation by grace through Christ, and can say, "Marvelous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well." This knowledge of the oneness of Christ and the church, which was a short time ago too wonderful for us, too high for us to attain unto, now comes sweetly

into the heart and understanding of even a little babe. Now we can see so joyfully that, "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." What a wonderful mystery this is, but what gladness it puts into our hearts to know that the church is never separate from Christ, that he knows, and eternally knew, her every thought and feeling and every desire, and all our longings; he saw the substance, the power, the body, of the church, and of every little babe in Christ. He saw the church "yet being unperfect;" not imperfect. All the work of God is perfect, so far as it is discovered to us, but no part of it can be called imperfect, though it is unperfect until the last stroke of work is done in its completion.

This must take our minds back to the beginning, before the foundation of the world, to the church as she appeared in the eyes of the Lord when he saw her substance. There is seen by faith the book which contains God's account of his eternal affairs. Here are seen by faith all the members of the body of Christ. Here is declared the truth that all of the members of his mystical body were written in that book while as yet there was none of them manifested. The expression, "which in continuance were fashioned," is very striking and full of meaning. To my mind reference is made here to the thorough foreknowledge of God concerning all the exercises, all the trials and deliverances, all the mourning on account of sin, and all the sense of justifying righteousness, which all the saints shall feel from the beginning to the end of time. God's purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world began, embraced all of this. Thus his people "in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." Thus he works in them that which is well pleasing in his sight, and fashions them according to his own will, to the praise of his glorious grace.

All that is done to the Lord's people in time by him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, is according to what he predestinated for them. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son."

How wonderful it is to have thoughts in my mind which I, though so dull and sinful, feel a sweet assurance were in the mind of the dear Savior for me before the world began. One life, one mind with that blessed and holy Jesus. Eternal life! "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." There is a sweet rest sometimes in such a thought of oneness with Christ as runs through all this Psalm. It is not a rest that turns us to the world for comfort, but a rest that wakes us up from worldly sleep and turns us to spiritual things and makes us feel and say as with renewed life, "I will praise thee: for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works: and that my soul knoweth right well."

"How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!" When we consider who the Lord is, and how infinitely great are his works, we can but wonder that he should have thoughts concerning such worthless creatures as we are. The psalmist expresses such wonder: "When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers; the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; what is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?" But we are given to understand that the dear Lord does have most precious thoughts concerning us, thoughts of love and tender compassion; "thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." His thoughts are not as our thoughts, but are higher than ours as the heavens are higher than the earth. If our thoughts were to prevail concerning the Lord and ourselves, then we could have no hope of his favor, for our thoughts are that a just and holy God cannot love sinners such as we are, for he is "of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity." We not only feel condemned, but feel also that he is just and right in holding us condemned. When we are thinking these things over, and realizing the glorious attributes and divine perfections of the eternal God, our thoughts cannot bring us one ray of hope. We can but admire his glorious perfection, yet we can but be overwhelmed with pain and sorrow and fearful forebodings on account of all that we know of him, and of our own sins, and of the claims of eternal justice. But when the Lord is pleased to reveal his thoughts to us, what a wonderful change takes place in our souls! How amazed we are! What surprising mercy and grace appear to us! We knew nothing of any such things before, although they were in the Lord's mind, eternally as we afterward learn. These thoughts of the Lord, and his ways which they reveal to us, are as high above ours as the heavens are above the earth, and the word that goes forth out of the Lord's mouth, bringing these precious thoughts to us, comes as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, returning not thither, but watering the earth and causing it to bring forth and bud, giving seed to the sower and bread to the eater. All the Bible is full of the Lord's thoughts concerning his people, and he gives knowledge of them to his people according to his own knowledge of their needs, and fills their souls with wonder, love and praise. When trouble and affliction on account of sin come upon one, so that "his soul draweth near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers," then the Lord sends a messenger, an interpreter, to show unto him the way of righteousness, and says, "Deliver him from going down to the pit; for I have found a ransom." —Job xxxiii. 24. Jesus appears as the only true and gracious interpreter of the Lord's precious thoughts, and then we are made to rejoice with joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. And so the church still goes on, telling of the Lord's wonderful thoughts and showing still that the church and the Savior are one, and ever to remain as one, and ever to be manifested in that sacred unity for the

comfort of every member of that mystical and glorious body, until time shall end: "That they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one."—John xvii. 22, 23.

More and more precious do the Lord's thoughts become to us as we are led sweetly into them from day to day. We cannot at any time get at them by our own will, nor can we get an understanding of them by study. It is only by revelation that they come to us, and for that we have to wait upon the Lord. Many a dark day and stormy night have we waited and longed for one precious word, for one "token for good," and have cried with the psalmist: "My soul thirsteth for thee. My flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." Then, it may be, only a word has dropped into our soul, and immediately we have been made like the chariots of Amminadib, and in the multitude of our thoughts within us the Lord's comforts have delighted our souls. (Psalms xciv. 19.) Then it seems at times as though the Lord were talking to us out of his Scriptures of truth, and telling us of his eternal thoughts of mercy toward us, and of his abounding grace which was given us in Christ before the world began, and of the unspeakable gift of his dear Son, who died to redeem us from all iniquity, and who is our life, and is of God made unto us righteousness.

How great is the sum of these precious thoughts of the Lord to us. The more we see of them the greater in number do they appear. "If we should count them, they are more in number than the sand." Strange that they should be compared to the sand in number, for we cannot count that. But his thoughts of redeeming grace and dying love are set over against something that brings out to our view the great number of these thoughts. "Mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of mine head; therefore my heart faileth me."—Psalms xl. 12. And this he says after he has experienced the power of saving grace, and has sung the new song, and has "preached righteousness in the great congregation." Thus it is shown here as elsewhere throughout the Scriptures, and in the experience of the Lord's children, that grace and mercy are needed every day by all of the Lord's people while in the flesh, and that only by the experience of a vital union with Christ can they have a satisfying righteousness, that righteousness which is of God by faith in Jesus Christ. Over against these iniquities, which are more than the hairs of our head, are set these precious thoughts of the Lord which are more in number than the sand.

As we count these mercies of the Lord, and these thoughts which cannot be counted, we are all the time engaged in our almost constant work of looking over our account with the Lord, trying to see how it stands between him and our souls, asking ourselves what evidences we can see that we have a good hope through grace, questioning whether we have not been laboring in vain, or whether we have not

left some necessary work undone, seeking to have some doubts removed and trying to confess to the Lord our transgressions in thought and word and deed; when, to our surprise, some sweet portion of the inspired Scriptures of truth comes into our mind, and we are at rest in a moment. All our restless work and struggling cease at once, and we are as one who falls into a quiet, restful sleep. It was vain for us to rise up early to our work, and sit up late in our efforts to accomplish it, so he has given his beloved sleep. Jesus is our rest and our peace, and "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding," is keeping our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. When we awake from such a peaceful, blessed sleep, during which the Lord has sustained us, we are apt to look hastily around us, at the world and at ourselves, to see if the Lord has not left us again to ourselves and to our doubts and fears. How inexpressibly sweet it is to be able to say, "When I awake, I am still with thee." The church thus feels and testifies truly to the faithfulness of the promise, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." "I laid me down and slept; I awaked: for the Lord sustained me."—Psalms iii. 5. "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me to dwell in safety."—Psalms iv. 8.

The next four verses of this remarkable Psalm tells of the wicked and of the destruction which awaits them, and of the hatred which is felt toward them by those in whom the Spirit dwells. "For they speak against thee wickedly, and thine enemies take thy name in vain. Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? and am I not grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies." This hatred does not appear to me like that which one man may feel toward another, of a worldly kind. Natural enmity may exist between two men, both of whom are at enmity with God. The enmity here spoken of is that which forever exists between the holy and righteous Spirit of God and all sin and wickedness. This hatred is a solemn, holy thing, a divine principle. It eternally exists between sin and the righteousness of God. It is not merely hatred against a man, but hatred of him as moved and controlled willingly by wickedness. Paul was the object of such divine hatred one day, and the object of divine love the next. Nay, even while one is yet a sinner, vile and polluted, he is the object of God's love, viewed as one of the election of grace. We cannot know who are of the elect until they are manifested; so when we see wickedness in any, and opposition to the Lord and to his glorious truth, we are grieved, and we can but feel that holy principle of hatred against them, though at some future time we may see them as lovers of that same truth and subjects of glorious grace. And we are to remember that our carnal minds are enmity against God, and that the principle of wickedness manifested in us is as hateful as when seen in a man who is entirely controlled by wickedness. In this sense the manifested child of God hates his own life; he hates the appearance of sin in his

own heart or lips or life. It is his desire to put off all that is sinful in his daily walk, not to be controlled by it. Therefore he prays earnestly: "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." This is the true and heartfelt prayer of every one of the Lord's manifested people when led by the Spirit of God. It was the desire of the dear Savior when he was in the flesh, and it was fulfilled in his experience, for he never sinned. He was tempted in all points like unto his people, yet without sin. In that sense he "knew no sin," and yet he suffered all their grief and bore all their pain and sorrow. This prayer has ever been the desire of the Lord's pople, for they must be of one life and one mind with him in whose book they were written as members when as yet there was none of them. To be searched by the Holy Spirit is most deeply trying and terrible, and yet how good and grateful it is to one who has been made humble in the fear of the Lord, and who has the "sentence of death" in himself, that he should not trust in himself, but in Christ who raiseth the dead. He who began this Psalm with the acknowledgment that the Lord had searched him and knew his thoughts, now prays for that searching to continue, that all evil may be searched out, that all dependence upon the flesh may be driven away, and that he may be led in the way everlasting.

How good and pleasant it is to be thus in the experience of holy fellowship and communion with the Lord in any degree, either in telling to his praise what he has done for us, as in the former part of this Psalm, or in supplication for the same needed mercies to be given us from day to day all our life through.

April, 1913.

THE AFFLICTIONS OF JOSEPH

(Amos vi. 1-6.)

Those who are at ease in Zion are described in the first verses of this chapter as living in luxury, resting upon their own works, self-satisfied, having all that heart can wish, claiming for themselves whatever they think belongs to the Lord's people. But one thing they lack, which essentially characterizes and distinguishes the people of God: "They are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph." All of the family of God are grieved for the afflictions of Joseph. One may appear to be possessed of every gospel grace, and of all spiritual riches and all Christian qualities, yet if he is not "grieved for the affliction of Joseph" he is not a child of God. It is evident that the Holy Spirit is directing the prophet to make this distinction between the carnal professor and one who has been born of God.

The manner of the prophet's allusion to Joseph, ages after he and all his brethren in the flesh had passed away, shows clearly that he speaks of Joseph as representing Jesus, and all this touching history as having its fulfillment in the experience of the saints. The Lord

sent a man before his people, even Joseph. (Psalms cv.) All that took place in Joseph's crooked and terrible journey to the end, we must remember, was according to the Lord's purpose, for the Lord sent him. He was his father's best loved son. His brethren hated him because he was his father's favorite. He dreamed peculiar dreams, and told them to his brethren, who hated him the more. In his dreams he was exalted, and this still increased their envy.

His father sent him down to where they were keeping sheep, to see how they did. One found him wandering in a field, and asked him what he sought. He said, "I seek my brethren." He was told where they talked of going and he went there. So far how clear the likeness to the history of the dear Savior. His brethren hated him because he told them that he was to be exalted.

Joseph's brethren said to each other: Here this dreamer cometh; let us kill him, and see what becomes of his dreams. They took the very way that led to the fulfillment of his dreams. Stephen said in his wonderful sermon (Acts vii.) that through envy the patriarchs sold Joseph into Egypt, but God was with him. It seems impossible that a human being could have been so cruel as these men were to that child, only seventeen years old. Murder of the most atrocious kind was in their hearts. Reuben, the eldest of the sons of Jacob, seems to have had a tender feeling, and undoubtedly felt the natural responsibility as the eldest, and as a kind of leader of the rest, but we do not read of any sign of repentance, or any word of confession to his father, or that he refused his part of the money. He induced his brothers to put Joseph in a pit, intending to deliver him, and he seems to have felt badly when he returned and did not find him. Then Judah seems to have conceived the idea of making money by selling Joseph to the Midianites. He talked nicely about it being no profit to slay their brother and conceal his blood, and about not letting their hands be upon him, because he was their brother and their flesh, but he could advise the selling of him for twenty pieces of silver. I do not see a spark of true compassion in either or any of them. It seems that no mortal could be so vindictive as they were; but he who has looked into his own heart in the light of divine life has had to acknowledge that such possibilities are there. These are the very cruelties which were manifested in the crucifixion of the dear Savior, and which were in the heart of Saul of Tarsus when he held the clothes of them who stoned Stephen to death; and it was not in what they did, but in my own experience, that I learned that "the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

When the Lord will teach his people concerning all these things he calls for a famine upon the land and breaks the whole staff of bread. (Psalms cv.) Years have passed by and we hear of nothing being said on the subject of Joseph among his brethren. All of Jacob's sons and all of his daughters have done what they could to comfort him. But he does not yet know the true history of Joseph, and how shame-

faced those men must have looked to each other. But now the Lord's time comes to have this history opened up in the Lord's way. Now the sons of Jacob, ten of them, are standing before Joseph, who is the lord of Pharoah's house and ruler of all his substance. They have money in their hands to buy corn; they are confident, and with honest face before this ruler, as they think, they can ask for this corn with the money in their hands to pay for it. But the man spake roughly to them, and declared his belief that they were spies. How confidently they can assert that they are true men, and not spies. But the ruler insists that they are spies, and insists the more roughly, saying, "By the life of Pharoah ye are spies." Then they tell him something of their family, and the fact is brought out that they have another brother who is at home with his father. Now their position is worse than ever. The younger brother must come down, or they are surely spies.

Now something is transpiring which is of a most wonderful character. These men find themselves thinking of their brother whom they sold into Egypt so many years ago. They never forgot that crime, but it did not seem to have hurt them, and they had evidently not thought of being troubled and hampered in this business transaction by that memory. But now that boy is before them, and between them and this man, and they hear his sobs and cries, and see the anguish of his soul; and even as they are engaged in this purchase of corn, and are denying the charge of being spies, they cannot keep his cries out of their ears, nor his piteous face out of their sight. Now they are beginning to be "grieved for the affliction of Joseph," not knowing that he stands before them, and that already he has turned aside to weep on their account. "And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us."

They are not yet fully humbled, they must have further teaching. They are now released from prison, and sent back to their father with corn, but Simeon is kept until they shall return to Joseph with their younger brother. But when they stop to feed their beasts they, to their astonishment, find their money in the mouth of their sacks. This fills them with terror. That corn which Joseph had laid up means grace to all the brethren of Jesus; they cannot buy it. While all the world can buy it with their money, their possessions, or by selling their labor for it, to the brethren of Joseph it can be received only as a gift of grace. Those who have spiritual life will find all their money and all their works of righteousness thrown back upon their hands. It will not be received in exchange for the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Their father will not consent that they shall take Benjamin. "Me have ye bereaved of my children: Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away: all these things are against me."

But finally he consented to let Benjamin go. He must give up all worldly treasures, all worldly possessions. And he said, "If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds; and take double money in your hand: and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight. Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man: and God Almighty give you mercy before the man, that he may send away your other brother and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

All is given up. The same promises we made to the Lord, which were broken, are renewed, and double promises are made. We are still depending upon our money, upon our good works, but are not allowed to go far with that false hope. They were told by the steward that God gave them treasure in their sacks. "I had your money." It is a most valuable treasure to know that Joseph's corn cannot be bought by one of his brethren, but that they must receive it as a free gift.

The steward, as directed by Joseph, has put the money back again in the mouth of each sack, and his divining cup in the mouth of Benjamin's sack, and when the cup is found in the sack of Benjamin they are lost in consternation, and have no more to say. Silently they return and throw themselves down before Joseph. He appears still to them as a stranger, and says, "What deed is this that ye have done? Wot ye not that such a man as I can certainly divine? And Judah said, God hath found out the iniquity of thy servants." They are now grieving for the afflictions of Joseph, and soon they are to know that this man, who has so long made himself strange to them, and has spoken roughly to them, has been their brother all the time.

But why Benjamin? Why must he appear to be the vilest of them all? Why must the divining cup be found in his sack? To show that each one of the Lord's people is to appear to himself to be the chief of sinners when he is tried by that divining cup. When the trial comes he has to say, "I am less than the least of all saints." "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing." No one can learn this truth from another, each must learn it for himself. Benjamin was not guilty with his brethren of this crime, but feels, by the power of that divining cup of Joseph, all the sinfulness manifested in those who committed the crime.

The afflictions of Joseph were because of the wicked treatment of him by his brethren, and so when they came to have a true brotherly sense of those afflictions of Joseph they were grieved for them. So the afflictions of Jesus were on account of the sins of his brethren against him, and when they are made alive spiritually, then they grieve for his sufferings. It was their sins that nailed him to the tree. He was afflicted in all their afflictions. They are crucified with him.

Those who do not suffer with him will not reign with him. "As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."—2 Cor. i. 5.

August, 1913.

FRAGMENTS

"Casting all your care upon him, for he careth for you."—1 Peter v. 7. But how can that be done? I have tried, oh, so many times, but never have accomplished the task. The care the apostle refers to is evidently of a very especial kind. He seems to be talking to ministers of the gospel, and in that case he not only has in mind the care which each individual has in regard to his personal affairs, and in his worldly relationships, but also the care of the churches. It is evident that this care is something that presses heavily upon the mind, causing much anxiety. It claims absorbing attention; it engrosses the mind; it swallows up the thoughts. Now to cast that care upon the Lord is, or appears to be, beyond my power. Many a time I have tried to cast some particular care upon the Lord, but found it impossible. The anxiety, the care, the painful worry, would remain unmoved. It would seem to me that it was presumption in me to think of such a thing as trying to burden the Lord with my affairs, so unimportant, and I so unworthy of his notice.

But the Lord can do it. These words of the apostle came to my mind not long since with some degree of power, and there was felt in my heart a sweet sense of relief; the weight of care was lessened, and a feelings of thankfulness was in my soul. The words had a new effect upon my mind; the care was in a measure gone; I hope it was cast upon the Lord, but it was his work, not mine. The coming of the words of the inspired apostle had done the work, or had caused me to do it; and it is one of the wonders of the gospel that the Lord's work is manifested in his people, and becomes their work by faith. He works in them "that which is wellpleasing in his sight." He will fulfill in them "the work of faith with power."

It is a sweet and comprehensive exhortation, or command, of the apostle to the saints to cast all their care upon the Lord. The apostles have the authority and power to issue such a command from their King, as his princes ruling in judgment. (Isaiah xxxii. 1.) He commands those to whom he thus writes to humble themselves under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt them in due time; then follow the words of the text as a part of the sentence, and as a part of the same work. Casting all their care upon the Lord is a part of the gracious work of the Lord in them, causing them to humble themselves under his mighty hand. Casting all our care upon the Lord does not leave the dear children of God without care, without work to do; does not leave them under the power of indolence, but rather makes them more heartily engaged and abounding in the work of the Lord, more careful to "maintain good works," more attentive to the needs of

others, and more trustful in the Lord, and more abiding in the doctrine and order of his house. It is very wonderful that whenever the Lord's people realize in their hearts and in their lives a gospel work, a walk with God in any measure, they at once give thanks to God for it. They do not seem in their own minds to take to themselves the credit of it, but ascribe it all to the great goodness and tender mercies of the Lord, and this is according to the gospel. We do not read in the Bible of any one receiving honor and praise but Jesus. Faithful servants of God are named, whose praise is in the churches, but one of them, who labored more than others, is very careful to remind his brethren that no one is to be regarded in his person as more to be noted or praised than another; that all are God's laborers together (laborers together with or under God); that all the praise for work done is fully and freely rendered unto God. When the heart and eyes of the Lord's people are lifted up, after beholding the saints, the greatest of them, with Jesus in glory, they see no man, but Jesus only.

"For he careth for you." This is a most wonderfully precious assurance given by the apostle to all of like precious faith with the apostles. "He careth for you." We had not thought of this as being possible, for the psalmist's thought had been ours, when we considered all his power and greatness and glory: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" and especially that are we, poor worms of the dust, that we should dare to think he could care for us? But, says the inspired apostle, "He careth for you." As the shepherd cares for the sheep, as the mother cares for the child, as the father cares for the son; and when that holy persuasion comes fully and sweetly into the soul, how freely and fully the cares that have been burdening us go out to the dear Savior, leaving us free and unburdened in the felt presence of our Redeemer, and then how sober and vigilant we become in opposition to the works of the devil, as the apostle commands us to, and how delightedly we abound in the works of the Lord. How full of tender love and compassionate interest are these words: "For he careth for you."

"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."—Luke xiv. 26. This word, "hate," in this place has not the same meaning which is expressed by it in ordinary conversation upon worldly things. The meaning of it in this natural sense is, a strong aversion, an intense dislike, with a desire to avoid the person so disliked, and generally a wish that evil may befall him. As used by the Savior it expresses the strong aversion of the Holy Spirit to all sin and wickedness. All men are sinners, made so by the disobedience of one man, Adam. When, therefore, any one of Adam's race is made alive to see himself as he stands in the sight of a holy God, he hates his own life. It is in this sense that the Savior speaks of one as hating his father and mother and all natural relatives.

Job, the perfect man, said, "I abhor myself." In the same sense the man who is a follower of Christ must be one who has a strong aversion to all sin and sinfulness in whomsoever it exists. While this is the case with him, he still loves his wife and children and all his relatives with the same natural love as before, and would do them good. His hatred of the sin and wickedness which is in them, and in himself, and in all flesh, does not destroy his love for them nor interfere with the sacred obligations which are binding upon him in those natural ties. The Savior and the apostles give commands and directions with reference to those sweet natural relationships, that all the mutual obligations which belong to them should be carefully and faithfully observed by his followers; while, at the same time, the heavenly, spiritual relationship in Christ, with all that pertains to it, rises high above all that is natural, as the heavens are higher than the earth, and swallows up all natural love, and light, and glory, as the light of the natural sun swallows up the light of the moon and stars. The child of God has an aversion for all that is evil, and a desire for that which is good. With the mind (the mind of Christ) he serves "the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." The new man of grace desires to follow the leadings of the Spirit, and to them he will cling, and them he will follow, when he is in the spirit, though all earthly relatives oppose him. In that sense he hates them all when he is following Christ, but is still faithful to them in all that is right and just.

FRAGMENTS

THE preacher may have some particular person in his mind to whom he is trying to give a word of comfort, or possibly a word of needed reproof or exhortation, but in my view he will seldom, if ever, succeed in reaching his intended mark. If his message has been noticed at all by the one at whom he aimed it, its whole force and meaning was probably lost upon him, or it was immediately handed over to some person unthought of by the preacher. It is not for the servant to decide as to who is the especial lamb or sheep that he is going to feed; it is not for him to say for what particular Ruth he is going to let fall some handfuls on purpose. That is for the Lord to decide. He sends by the hand of him by whom he will send, and the word that he sends never fails to reach the heart of the one to whom he sends it, and the praise goes directly back to him.

I have heard this of Mr. William Gadsby: He noticed a certain young nobleman attending his meeting for awhile. He hoped it might be the Lord's purpose to bring the young man into the church, and had him in his mind when he was presenting some portions of gospel truth in his sermons. After awhile the young nobleman ceased to attend the meetings, and one day there came a beggar boy before the church asking for admission and baptism. In telling his experience he referred to some of those things in Mr. Gadsby's sermons which he had preached when the young nobleman was present. Mr. Gadsby

said: "Where were you when you heard me preach? I never saw you in the church." "No," the boy replied, "I did not feel worthy to be in the congregation, I was around back, under the stairway." And Mr. Gadsby said, "What I intended for the young nobleman, the Lord sent to the beggar boy under the stairs."

Sometimes I fear that I am losing my gift, if ever I had one, or if the church ever had a gift in me. But if so, what can I do? I am so cold at times, and I cannot warm my cold heart by anything I can do. Sometimes I fear that the love of God is gone out in my heart, and I cannot kindle it again. I cannot put love into my heart, and that is the one essential thing in any gift. Without love no gift is of any real value to the Lord's people. Whatever power there may appear to be in the speaking, or writing, or other work, of any one, without love he is of no value to the Lord's hungry poor. If the love of Christ does not constrain him in his work nothing else will cause him to reach the needy soul. To one who is in a dry and thirsty land where no water is, and is calling unto the Lord for help, no power of thought or fervency of expression, no zeal, no self-devotion, will be of any avail, unless love is dwelling and moving in all. I surely have known that love, and there is a kind of comfort in remembering the seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, when his love filled my soul. Once, in a time of darkness and sorrow which had been long extended, the words, "Perfect love casteth out fear," were given me, and instantly there was in my soul a solemn joy and peace that I cannot describe. Now in this time of coldness and sorrow I look back with longing and a kind of confidence in the Lord to that time of comfort, which lasted me long, and cry for it again. I want it again, and I want it still more, and I want to live more fully under its divine and holy power; I want to have my heart and life full of that love which passeth knowledge; that love which is not merely an emotion, but is a holy and immovable principle; that love which "beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things." It is a comfort now to think of the words of a hymn which have just come to my mind:

"If once the love of God we feel
Upon the heart impressed,
The mark of that celestial seal
Can never be erased."

When I am asked concerning my present condition of mind spiritually I am likely to begin considering how I ought to feel if I am a child of God, instead of how I do feel, and to draw the conclusion that my hope may well be questioned. If I feel as one in a furnace, in great tribulation, in affliction, darkness and coldness, and that the sinfulness of my soul is greater than I can bear, I set this all down as against me. But it is not what I think my present state of mind ought to be, if I am born of God, that I am asked about, but what

it is. No one is fully qualified to decide upon the character of his own exercises of mind and his spiritual condition. He must have witnesses, must have the testimony of others who have been called by grace. As he is constrained to tell honestly of his darkness and trouble of soul, of his sins and transgressions in thought and word and deed, that often assail him, with the fears of death and the terrors of hell, he finds a response in the dear Savior's words, who is the faithful and true witness, and in the testimony of all the saints in all ages. Those who stand before the great white throne, clothed in white robes, with palms of victory in their hands, have all come out of great tribulation. Sin is hateful to all who have been made alive unto God. From all sin these shall be brought away by the sweet power of Jesus. They shall come with weeping, and with supplication will the Lord lead them, and they shall all sing in the heights of Zion. (Jer. xxxi.)

April, 1914.

THE NINETIETH PSALM

Not distinctly a Psalm, but a prayer, and that not the prayer of an ordinary man, but "a prayer of Moses, the man of God." This must be carefully observed, in order that many peculiar expressions in the Psalm may be understood. In this prayer Moses tells the trials, the experiences, the afflictions, the desires, of the Lord's people while under the law. Some of these peculiar expressions would not be true of those who have been given a good hope of life and salvation through Jesus Christ. The gospel character could not truthfully say, All of our days are passed away in God's wrath, but Moses could say it for all who are feeling the just condemnation of his holy law.

This wonderful prayer begins with the declaration of a glorious truth which underlies and comprehends all the reasons for true, spiritual prayer: "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations." Not only in all generations in time, but "before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou [art] * God." No language could more fully and clearly declare the blessed truth that the Lord has ever been, is now, and will ever be, in time and in eternity, the dwelling place of his people. It seems to be the especial intention of the inspired writer to establish this glorious truth, upon which so much depends, for all spiritual blessings which the church receives in time are given according as God hath chosen his people in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world. (Eph. i. 3, 4.)

Those who have been given divine life have a desire for that spiritual dwelling place, and for all the things that belong to it, even while their flesh is still sinful, and while they feel the condemnation of the

* Note that I enclose the word art in brackets to call attention to the fact that it is a supplied word, and not in the original language. I believe the true meaning of the text is expressed only when that word is omitted. I think the correct reading would be to repeat the first sentence of the Psalm after the word "God." Thou, God, hast been our dwelling place.

law. In the Lord's manifested people the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, causing those who have eternal life to desire the things of God. So at the beginning of this all-comprehensive prayer this truth is expressed in unmistakable terms.

All true prayer is prophetic, and will surely be answered. The Lord does not pour the spirit of grace and supplication upon his people in vain. Notwithstanding the opposition of the flesh, the Lord's will and purpose will be accomplished. Now a wonderful thing is declared concerning the Lord's work, which our natural mind will be ready to dispute: "Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men." The power and province of God are here referred to by Moses as that which inspires true prayer. There must be a knowledge by faith of those things which are the subjects of our desires and petitions before we can pray for them. No one can truly ask for anything he does not want. There must be a revelation in the soul of the things of the Spirit before one can pray for them. Elijah must have been given knowledge of God's purpose to bring upon the nation of Israel the terrible judgment of drought, and he must have been made to earnestly desire it before he could have earnestly prayed for it. "Every one that asketh receiveth." But the prayer must be according to the will of God. The Lord desires holiness, purity, the destruction of evil works, the fulfillment of all righteousness. His Spirit in his people causes them to desire the same. The fear of the Lord is to hate evil. That holy principle in the hearts of his people causes them to hate evil, and to desire its desruction. The works of the flesh are all evil, and shall be destroyed. They shall perish like the grass. They are all as filthy rags. They all do fade as a leaf. The Lord alone can make any man see and know this. He only can turn his people to destruction, by causing them to see and know in their own hearts the sure destruction of all hope of righteousness by the works of the law. The natural man is satisfied with his own righteousness until he is turned thus to its destruction. He is turned from all his vain hopes and all worldly ambitions and desires for worldly exaltation, and sees sure destruction awaiting him, until the Lord reveals to him Jesus as the way of salvation, and says to him with power, "Return, ye children of men."

"For a thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past, and as a watch in the night." How wonderful to think of the Lord as having all these thousand years before him, while generations have been coming and going, and men have lived and suffered and died, and nations have arisen and have been destroyed, and histories have been made and forgotten; with the Lord all this thousand of busy, throbbing years have been but as yesterday, when it is past, and are now but "as a watch in the night." Only one watch in all this thousand years, while men and nations have been watching and waiting, and that one watch not yet begun, for it is still yesterday. It is too great a subject for me to think about, much less expound.

"Thou carriest them away as with a flood." As though an overwhelming flood had carried away the years, with all that pertains to them. Only destruction and desolation left. But the Lord's will has been done with the thousand years that are gone. "They are as a sleep;" a sleep filled with dreams so varied, so full of things, so great, so widespread, so full of activity, full of people moving to and fro; but in an instant the sleep is ended, and we reach out to grasp some of the broken dreams that filled the half hour's sleep. but they are gone; not one thing left. So all the thousand years in God's sight are as a sleep. Also they are like the grass which groweth up. In the morning it flourisheth and groweth up, in the evening it is cut down and withereth. "For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled."

It is the flood of years we are considering, but also, and particularly, the people of God, whom these years concern. We think of the passing of time, and of the changes of seasons, and of the failure of all earthly things to endure, and of how quickly they pass away; and then how good it is to reflect that all the things of time and eternity are ever before the Lord, "our dwelling place," as one eternal now, for he inhabiteth eternity. And so this prayer of Moses comes to the time when the people of God are brought sensibly under the law of sin and death, and are made to feel the wrath of God against sin, and to know his anger which consumes them. Moses tells them in this wonderful prayer to the Lord the cause of all their trouble: "Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance." When the light of God's countenance is turned upon one, and the heart is laid open before him, nothing can be hidden from his sight. It is then that all our days are passed away in God's wrath, and we spend our years as a tale that is told. This is true only of the Lord's people who have been brought to see themselves as justly condemned, and who have not yet known the way of salvation through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. At that time the poor soul sees nothing to live for but to await the execution of God's just anger against sin; for the story of his life seems ended, the tale is told.

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten: and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow: for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." Why this particular number of years is named as the measure of man's life I do not know. I have thought it may have been given to express the extreme limit of time when a man could hope to do effective work no more; when he could expect to carry out no ambitious purposes for himself or others. This appears more likely to have been the mind of the Spirit by the possible years to fourscore by reason of strength. The result of all the years given to man under the law, whether more or less, is "labor and sorrow." Man's work in natural things is labor and success, labor and joy. One man begins to build, and reasonably expects to succeed. If he fails, another follows and finishes the work.

But in the work of salvation a man always fails. No man can possibly make himself righteous by any work of his own, nor can he possibly procure salvation for another. With the sinner this work is always a failure; with him the years, even if fourscore, are always "labor and sorrow." The years are soon gone, the labor is soon cut off, and we fly away. Again and again during the years in which this fruitless labor goes on, our minds are returning to our sad condition, and going over the ground to see if there can possibly be found any way in which our sins can be put away, any way in which justice can be done and we become righteous and pure and holy. And Moses still in his prayer for us repeats in wonderful language the grounds of our condemnation: "Who knoweth the power of thine anger? even according to thy fear, so is thy wrath."

We are told that "the fear of the Lord is to hate evil," and the Lord says of his people, "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." In proportion as that holy and divine principle of reverential fear of the Lord is in the heart, in such proportion we know the power of God's anger against sin. But while we feel the power and justice of God's anger against sin, there is an exalted comfort in the very feeling of hatred against sin, and of love for holiness in our hearts. It is an unspeakable blessing to have that holy spirit of the fear of God in our hearts, which characterizes all of this sweet and beautiful prayer, even though it causes us to write bitter things against ourselves.

"So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom." This is the beginning of the form of supplication in this wonderful "prayer of Moses, the man of God." Hitherto he has made statements of truth concerning the Lord and his work, and the effect of his law upon the hearts of his people when applied to them by the Holy Spirit, causing them to see and feel their sinfulness and their just condemnation. Now the form of prayer and supplication begins. Those who have known the power of God's anger against sin have felt the love and fear of God in their hearts. They hate evil and love holiness, and hunger and thirst after righteousness. They desire to be pure and holy, but sin has already taken possession of them, so that they cannot do the things that they would. The fault seems always to be in their works, which are not good enough, and they try to do better, and so to turn the wrath of God away from them; and now they call upon the Lord to help them in this work, to help them to become righteous. They feel that if they made better use of their time they could do better, and they ask the Lord to teach them so to number their days, so to realize the value of them, and how short they are, even in the longest life, that they may apply their hearts unto wisdom, and so may accomplish more in their efforts to become holy; and this desire and prayer of their hearts will be answered, but it will be in a way not known to them at present, nor by their own works, but by the work of Jesus, and to his glory.

"Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent thee concerning thy servants." Moses is still speaking in prayer, but is talking to the faith of the Lord's people, and pleading with him for them that he would be pleased to return from his anger against sin, and whether he could not repent, or change from his purpose to punish sin in his servants. This supplication in their behalf is most earnest, for faith has given Moses an assurance that opens up to him the dawning of the gospel day, when Jesus should be exalted that he might have mercy upon the Lord's servants, and that mercy might rejoice against judgment. (James ii. 13.) Every provision of the law, and every gospel declaration and promise found in the law and in the prophets and the Psalms, has precious reference to the unspeakable blessings of the gospel dispensation. So to the sorrowful soul who has been suffering from the wrath of God, in which his days are passed away because he sees no way in which the just demands of the law can be satisfied and the sinner saved, there is a sweet feeling of submission and comfort in the inspired words of this prayer: "Oh, satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days." It is to that faith which is "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen," that the man of God speaks, and by that faith the Lord's people hear and feel the goodness of spiritual things, and know the spiritual satisfaction that is in them.

This gladness which the Lord puts into the hearts of his people is more than the time when their corn and their wine increased. Nothing in this world can be like it. It is most solemn and pure, and fully satisfies our inmost desires, whatever of deepest affliction we may have; whatever of pain and sorrow, it will not interfere with this work of the Lord. He makes us glad, and who can make trouble? This gladness is set over against our sorrows, so that in both we rejoice. "Make us glad according to the days wherein thou hast afflicted us, and the years wherein we have seen evil." Now we are seeing that every twinge of pain was necessary, and will work for our good. Every experience of tribulation has worked some patience, some endurance. We now can pray that sorrow may be turned into joy. Darkness is made light before us, and crooked things straight. What wonderful assurance is here, what boldness of faith, that we should be able to pray that all our weary days of affliction and our long years of bitter pain and sorrow shall be turned into joy and gladness.

"Let thy work appear unto thy servants, and thy glory unto their children." The works of the sinner cannot remove the sin. He can do no more toward that work in a thousand years than in one day. The more he sees and feels the nature of sin, and the just condemnation of the sinner, the more clearly he sees that by the works of the law no flesh can be justified in God's sight. All the preceding part of this prayer, so solemnly expressed, enlarges upon the sad condition of the sinner, and tells the desires of the redeemed soul for the mercy of the Lord, which will cause him to rejoice and be glad all his days.

It is only by the Lord's work that this wonderful change can be brought about. All the holy men of old desired to see this work, but it was hid from those ages and generations. "The prophets desired and searched diligently to know what, and what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow." Now there is a special desire that the Lord's work may appear, since the work of man has utterly failed. "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." —Romans v. 19. Jesus obeyed the law for all of his people, being delivered for their offences and raised up for their justification. The law can bring no charge against them, for their debt is fully paid, and herein appears the Lord's glory unto the children of the prophets. The bold challenge can now be sent forth to all the enemies of the dear redeemed of the Lord: "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" The Lord's work is not seen by the natural eye, nor understood by the natural mind. It is known only by revelation, and that revelation is only to babes, to those who have been born of God. This glorious work of Jesus appears unto the Lord's servants. It is made known to their faith. It appears in their experience, silencing all the charges that may be brought against them, and causing them to rejoice and be glad all their days, even according to the days wherein the Lord has afflicted them, and made them to see evil under the law.

"And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." Throughout all of this sweet and glorious prayer of Moses there is something so unspeakably sublime that my soul has trembled at the thought of venturing to write about it. But here I find something that now appears more transcendent, more heavenly, than any preceding expression, causing me to question seriously whether I ought to have undertaken to write upon a subject so glorious, so far beyond my feeble powers of comprehension, as this expression, "The beauty of the Lord." How often I have had those wonderful words in my mind, and tasted their sweetness, and tried to think of their meaning, and wondered if I had ever had any of that precious meaning in my soul. To those who under the law were enabled to look upon Zion, the Lord said by the prophet, "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off."—Isaiah xxxiii. 17-20. This Zion is called "the perfection of beauty," for out of her God hath shined. (Psalms l. 2.) She is also spoken of as "beautiful for situation," and "the joy of the whole earth." This, then, presents the beauty of the Lord. His work in the church is perfect, and the beauty of all that work is unspeakable. When the Lord builds up Zion he appears in his glory. (Psalms cii. 10.) All of the order and ordinances and doctrine of the church are perfect, and just such as are most lovely and pleasing to the most exalted intelligence and spiritual desire of the divine nature. All of the work required to be done by

those who were under the legal covenant was required to be perfect. Every offering must be without blemish; also the priest who made the offering; and all the ordinances of divine service, and everything that pertained to that worldly sanctuary, must be without fault. These "patterns of things in the heavens" must show the absolute perfection that would appear in the glorious realities when the spiritual substance should appear. When the work in the first covenant was done, as required by the Lord's servants, it was all natural, but these natural things pointed to the spiritual things belonging to the church in her spiritual perfection and beauty. Then, when that church appeared in her gospel meaning, the work of those servants was established upon them. That was what Moses prayed for. And now, under the glorious gospel dispensation, it is the desire of the Lord's servants that their work may be established upon them; that all the work of our hands in attending to the order of the church may be so truly and faithfully done that our souls may experience the spiritual power and precious reality of the things which are not seen, which are eternal. (2 Cor. iv. 18.) When the members of a church are dwelling together in unity, walking in the order and ordinances of the Lord, and holding fast the form of sound words which they have heard from the apostles, then the beauty of the Lord is upon them. Out of Zion, out of that church, God shines. He appears only in Zion. Those who are united in such a church are as happily situated and as signally favored and blessed as a people can be in this world of sin and sorrow.

"The church of God is fair." All that presents her as the perfection of beauty is the Lord's work. Every ordinance, every gift, every grace, and all the experience of grace and salvation seen and known in this glorious church, are God's work. He shines out of all, and so presents his own perfect beauty in her. One thing every saint desires of the Lord, and that they seek after, to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of their life, that they may behold the beauty of the Lord and inquire in his temple; that they may be always inquiring of him, always communing with him, always looking upon Zion, always beholding the beauty of the Lord, as it appears in his wonderful works, which he has established upon his people in the gospel of his Son.

October 1, 1914.

THINGS HID FROM THE WISE AND PRUDENT

(Matt. xi. 25.)

Have "these things" been hidden from me? That is very important for me to know. I feel so greatly lacking in wisdom and prudence that I might well be compared to a babe—utterly helpless. But is this sense of helplessness which I feel true humbleness of mind on account of a felt poverty of spirit, or is it only a natural desire for worldly knowledge and wisdom? I have some hope that I am included among those of whom the Savior speaks when he says, "I thank thee, O

Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." "These things" are the things pertaining to the work of salvation in all of its parts. In Luke x. 21, it is said that Jesus "rejoiced in spirit," the only time he is said in the New Testament to have rejoiced; and this was in spirit, not in the flesh. And that which caused him to rejoice in spirit, and give thanks to the Father, was the very doctrine which the carnal mind hates: the doctrine of election. "The carnal mind is enmity against God."—Romans viii. 7. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."—1 Cor. ii. 14.

It was in the wisdom of God that the world did not know him by wisdom. (1 Cor. i. 21.) It was in the highest wisdom of the eternal God that these things were hid from the wisdom and prudence of the natural man. They cannot be studied out and learned by the application of the greatest mental powers. The natural understanding cannot receive the knowledge of them. It is only by revelation that they can be known by any man. "God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." By that Spirit alone can we know the things that are freely given to us of God. (1 Cor. ii. 10-12.)

How wonderful that the dear Savior should have rejoiced especially, and that he should have thanked the Father because these things were hid from the wise and prudent and were revealed unto babes. But it is clear that this was done in infinite love to his dear people, and that there comes a time in the experience of each of them when they will know that this is also a special cause for praise and thanksgiving to God from them. If these spiritual blessings were to be received by us upon conditions to be performed by us, and to be contended for against those who are strong and wise, then what should we do when sickness and weakness and poverty of spirit come upon us, and we become as a little, helpless babe? If salvation came by the works of the law, then we must lie down and die. The weakest must go to the wall, if it were with spiritual things as it is with things of the world.

But how different is the receiving of knowledge by revelation from the receiving of it as the result of labor and searching. No man hath seen God at any time; but the Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath revealed him. We do not have a work to do in order to have that revelation, but there is a preparation for it which we know nothing of until it is done. The preparation for it is the new birth, a little babe. A strong man finds himself as helpless as that babe on account of sin. In his soul he finds himself struggling, moving about, crying, trying to get up. "The preparation of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." There is no one that can help in this matter. The little babe cannot help itself; it does not know what to do but cry. It can get nothing to eat until the time

comes that its lips touch the breasts of Zion's consolations. Then it may be long before the babe knows that this is indeed the fountain from whence its true food is to be received.

All this knowledge comes by revelation. As the child grows spiritually it finds things to wonder at from day to day. It can be told nothing of real spiritual benefit except what it has first experienced. Then the preaching and the exercise of other gifts of the Savior will be needed, and will be received as the Lord in his providence and grace gives them, and thus the child of God will "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."

How good we at times feel it to be that the Lord has used the word "babes" in this sweet teaching, thus keeping the arms of his love reached out to us as to babes, all the way through our mortal pilgrimage; for no matter how deeply and widely any one may be engaged in the work attending the exercise of gifts, many are the times when he is a very little babe in his experience, and needs greatly the comfort of the Lord's precious promise: "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you; and ye shall be comforted in Jerusalem." It was when standing with his disciples and other men of strength and ability that Jesus expressed this prayer to the Father, and talked of them as babes. This means that he never leaves his people dependent upon themselves for any spiritual or natural blessing. They do at times feel grown up and able to take care of themselves, but he has prepared a goodly supply for them of trials, afflictions and tribulations, which he brings upon them most surely in such times of need, and so preserves them in true and heartfelt humility.

"Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." This is the only reason that ever can be truly given for anything which the Lord does. The only criterion by which to judge of what it was right for the Lord to do is what he has done. People have sometimes said of the doctrine of election and predestination, "It cannot be true, for the Lord would not do that way." But the question for us is as to what the Lord has done, not what we think he ought to have done. It is what seemed good in his sight. What do the Scriptures say he did? That is what it was infinitely right and wise for him to do. And the only criterion by which to judge what is right for a man to do is what the Lord commanded him to do. We cannot judge of the Lord's ways and thoughts by our own, for his ways and thoughts are higher than ours, as the heavens are higher than the earth. (Isaiah lv. 9.) "He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment." Of anything which the Lord has done it is enough for us to say, "So it seemed good in his sight." Often we have found rebellion in our poor, carnal minds, and a disposition to say, "Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?"—Romans ix. 19. We may reply that no one has ever successfully resisted his will; but the apostle does not argue the question with us, but rebukes the rebellious thought in our

hearts, and says: "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"—Romans ix. 20.

There is a preparation of heart necessary for the knowledge and reception of all the truth of God; and how we rejoice at times and thank God that he, who is infinitely wise and merciful, does his will in heaven and earth and in all deep places, and that there is none to stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? Our salvation is in that infinite power which is in his kind and loving hands, and we cannot but rejoice and give thanks unto God when we can say, "Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight."

"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." How very little I know, if anything, concerning this mysterious and wonderful relationship of Father and Son and Holy Spirit. The Father alone knows the Son, and that knowledge consists in the delivery unto the Son of all "these things" of the gospel. No gospel blessing, no gospel knowledge, comes to any of the sons of men except through the Son. The Son is the Word. Through him are communicated to the elect all the purpose of love and mercy which the Father purposed in himself before the world began. All spiritual blessings are now in the Son, in the Word, and are given unto the dear people of God by this "Word," which was made flesh and dwelt among us.

No man knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. The revelation of the Father by the Son is not a scientific or philosophical subject we are considering, which opens to us its treasures of knowledge as we study it, but it is a spiritual subject which is only known by the revelation of the Father through the Son. We can receive and understand it only by that faith which is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. An apostle says, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." This is the revelation of the Father by the Son, and is an experience. This is a filial relationship felt in the soul at times.

FEBRUARY, 1915.

THE LABORING AND HEAVY LADEN

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."—Matt. xi. 28.

The work on hand must be done; much depends upon its accomplishment. I fully realize the importance of it, but I also am sure of my ability to do and complete the work by the given time, therefore I am not troubled or burdened by it, but am rather animated and pleased as I enter upon the labor enjoying the work itself, and the confident assurance of its fulfillment when required. I am laboring, but am not heavy laden. To those who are well, and strong, and ener-

getic, work is pleasant. It is good to have both the mind and body actively engaged, and a man of this character will of choice work hard, and to the limit of his strength, even though it is not required that he should do so. And though he may find it necessary to urge himself forward, he is not heavy laden. He is able to use his utmost strength, and to do all that is required each day, and so to keep even with the work as it is called for, and is still not heavy laden.

But should this man lose the use of some member of his body, leaving him able to do only half a day's work in a day, while a full day's work is still absolutely necessary and required, he will soon find himself crushed down under a burden of unfinished work. Struggle as he will, and as he must, the burden still increases, until he is rendered utterly helpless.

In the religious world all men seem to be engaged in the service of some God, with the feeling that they must do something to please him in order that they may be happy after death. It seems to be the common sentiment of natural men that they must do some work in order to obtain salvation. If grace is thought necessary to that work, the thought of the natural mind is that grace is to show us what to do and how to do it. But something must be done by the man in order to his salvation; that is the universal belief of all men. It seems also to be unquestioned that the man is able to do that something, whatever it may be. And when one has done that work, and has thus obtained that salvation in his own estimation, he is very likely to be so well assured of his ability that he believes he can be the means of saving others. In the Lord's own good time he will teach his people the truth concerning their salvation, and it will be in such a way that they can say of the dear Savior, He teacheth as never man taught. It is written in the Psalms, "Blessed is the man whom thou choosest, and causest to approach unto thee."—Psalms lxv. 4. This is where the Lord begins in the salvation of his people. He chooses them, but this choice was before the foundation of the world, and all spiritual blessings were given them in Christ according to that eternal choice. Now he calls them, and causes them to approach unto him. (Eph. i. 4.)

It is this choice, and the manner of it, and the experience of it, and all the incidents attending it, that I love to dwell upon. It is so wonderful, so deep, so great, and yet so simple, and so like the crying and the laughing and the prattle of a little babe. Until there is a new, spiritual birth there are no such experiences and exercises of mind, for there is no life until then. Until there is divine life there is no hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Until then there is no preparation in their hearts for the sweet call of the dear Savior, who says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." These chosen ones are the babes unto whom the Lord reveals these things of the gospel, and unto whom the Son reveals the Father. When one is quickened by divine life then he begins to work in earnest, in order to gain salvation. Soon he finds himself

failing here and there in his work. He cannot find anything perfect in whatever he does. His best works do not satisfy his conscience, they get poorer and more faulty every day. His prayers do not suit him, they seem only a chattering noise. This poor soul seems to himself to be getting farther away from the Lord every day. Instead of that, however, he is getting farther away from himself, farther from any hope in himself, and nearer to the Lord. This is the way that the Lord causes his chosen to approach unto him. They work until they are at the end of the earth before they see the salvation of God. (Isaiah lii. 10.)

Now they labor and are heavy laden. Not one thing have they been able to do to lighten the burden of their sins, or to discover any way in which they can be saved from them. And now Jesus calls them, and in that call describes them: "laboring and heavy laden." They cannot stop working any more than a man in the waves can stop struggling. They hear no voice with the natural ear, they see no man, but in the Savior's own good time they are at rest. They may see their sins yet, but the power has gone from them. They are at peace, yet cannot tell why. They cannot understand it, for the peace of God "passeth all understanding." The light of the sun gets to us before we can see the sun. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." It may be some time before we know that Jesus has given us that sweet command, that holy call; long before we know that he has called us to himself. We do not know it because some man or angel has told us. We know it because we have felt the power of that rest, the power of that sweet, spiritual voice. He himself has told us the holy secret, and we have felt the power of that wonderful voice in our souls, saying, "It is I." And when another in preaching or speaking proclaims the name and power of Jesus, we understand and know that this is Jesus because we have felt his power. The preacher tells us our own experience; he is our witness.

Jesus did not say, "If you will come unto me I will give you rest." He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness does not use that form of speech; he does not invite; he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. We were very tired, worn out with labor, when he called us. We did not, perhaps, at the time think it was Jesus, but the communication was with power. There was no resisting power in our hearts to stand against the power of Jesus' words, "Come unto me." Before we knew he had called, we were there, at his feet, in the bosom of his love, in the palace of the great King. All the infinite blessings of the Father were ours, though we knew it not, when the Son thus revealed the Father unto us, and the Holy Spirit took of the things of Jesus and showed them unto us.

Oh, how much was shown to us in that wonderful time! How could a babe understand such great and marvelous things? Some of us have

been hearing most wonderful things out of that first revelation of Jesus ever since that time. It is the power of that life, which is in the babe as well as in the greatest prophet.

No, not an invitation. That would not be consistent with the infinite character and holy prerogatives of Jesus, our Savior and King. In our experience we do not find anything which the dear Savior says to us that we feel we are to take into our minds, and look over, as an invitation, and decide whether we will accept it or not. These wonderful things are taught us in our souls; through them we grow up into Jesus. The mystery is, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." That mystery was hid from past ages, as it is now revealed unto his people. They grow from within, like the palm tree.

And still our thoughts go on, over and over again, and always finding something new. Jesus has told of the revelation of these precious things to babes, while they are hid from worldly wisdom, and no reason for it except that it seemed good in the sight of the Father, and of the revelation of the Father by the Son to whomsoever he will. And now we have been considering the most wonderful way in which this revelation is made. For this is that sweet and holy revelation of the Father, when the dear Savior said, "Come unto me," to all that were laboring and heavy laden. We took no journey, we did not start out east or west, we did not reach upward toward heaven or go searching into the depths, as we had done many times before, but right by us, in our hearts, there was the dear Savior, and the Father was there. We felt his presence, yet not in the natural way of thinking. His love was in our souls. The power of the Father was there, and yet we were not afraid, but could throw ourselves at his feet and leave our all with him. How little we knew then, and yet as we look over the sacred ground after more than fifty years, how much we knew. How soon the Bible began to talk to us.

We can understand in a measure the spiritual meaning and power of the things we felt at that time, and how it was that we came to Jesus from the ends of the earth. The words, though familiar to me, appeared wonderfully new: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness." The thought in my mind was, "Perhaps I am one of those for whom Jesus died." It had the force of certainty, and was as though the sun rose at midnight, and for the first time in my life I could feel and know true gladness. More than fifty years have passed since then, but I feel something of that power and gladness in those wonderful words to-day, though greatly tempered by the sorrows and tribulations I have come through.

Now as I look back I can at times see evidences that Jesus at that time said to my soul, "Come unto me," "and I will give you rest," so that I felt the power of them, though they were not in my mind just at that time. I had labored up to the last moment, trying to find out what I could do to obtain salvation, and had given up the hope that I could do anything. Then, unexpectedly, I was at rest and full of

gladness, with the words I have mentioned on my mind, and their power in my heart. It was some days before the words of my text, "Come unto me," &c., were given to me, but when they were brought to my mind, and were with me nearly all of one night, I felt that I knew them. The sunshine must be upon us before we can know there is a sun. In his light only can we see light. So by the words of the dear Savior, the Sun of Righteousness, alone can we know him, and be assured that he has risen upon us. Who would take a candle, or any earthly light, by which to see the sun and show it to others? We delight in the sweet words of the psalmist: "For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."—Psalms xxxvi. 9.

What different kinds of burdens we have borne in our journey so far; what various kinds of trouble and affliction we have been brought through. How many times we have said, "This sorrow is too heavy to be borne, I must certainly fail." But whenever any of the Lord's dear children have come to the end of the earth, laboring and heavy laden, they shall each and all of them find the Lord's promise equal to the occasion and it will never fail them. He said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden." He said it once for all, and it will not fail to reach every one of them just at the right time. He did not say you that are "weary." Better than that. A weary man may lie down and rest. But these are all laboring, hard at work; no time to rest even for a moment; always laboring, and still heavy laden; burdened in body and mind and heart, and borne down with grief and sorrow and tribulation. To these afflicted ones, to all of them, without one exception, the dear Savior says, "Come." He who said, "Let there be light," says, "Come." He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in the heart of every laboring and heavy laden one, saying, "Come." He in whose hand is the king's heart, to turn whithersoever he will, as the rivers of water, has said, and still always says: "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

MARCH, 1915.

THE GOSPEL YOKE

"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me."—Matt. xi. 29.

The Savior gives this sweet command to all those whom he has already called to come out from under the law of sin and death, where they had been engaged in ceaseless but unsuccessful labor. All they who labor under the legal yoke are still heavy laden, for no man can do the work which the law requires; it is therefore a hard bondage to those who are under it. Now they have experienced the dear Savior's holy call, and have come unto him, but do not know how it was done. They are resting in Jesus, but do not know why. The law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ has made them free from the law of sin and death, but it is a wonderful mystery to them, which he only can explain to them.

The mind of this subject of grace is now drawn with divine power to things of the gospel. They find a beauty and a holy interest in the Scriptures of truth. They find the burden of condemnation gone, and in the Lord's own time they are given to realize a most precious and solemn hope that Jesus died for their sins, and so satisfied the law for them. Now they love the church and kingdom of God. The themes of salvation, and grace, the love of God, and the way of righteousness, and all kindred subjects, which were formerly tedious and disagreeable to them, are now most sweet and delightful to their souls. In their hearts Jesus is now saying to them, "Take my yoke upon you." He does not talk and give commands as men do. He speaks to the heart. He puts the desire for gospel blessings in their souls. He writes the things which he will have them to know and to desire, not with ink, not on tables of stone, but with the Spirit of the living God on the fleshly tables of their heart.

"And learn of me." Up to this time the Lord's people have been learning of the world, and trying to gather knowledge from worldly sources. Religious things have hitherto been settled in their minds according to the thoughts and dictates of worldly wisdom. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." How blessed it is to learn of Jesus. How different he is from all worldly teachers. How different the manner of teaching, and how very different the things that are taught by him. The whole of this spiritual teaching is strongly opposed by the wisdom of the world. But the mind in which the dear Savior is teaching his thoughts and ways, which are infinitely higher than ours, leads us to desire to be alone with Jesus, and with the few that love him, rather than with all the richest, the wisest and the most exalted people that can be found in this world.

"For I am meek and lowly in heart." How wonderful this is: "meek and lowly." No one of all the race of men can truly say this of himself but Jesus. My pen almost shrinks back, and refuses to touch the paper, in trying to say anything as to the deep meaning of these two words. They belong to Jesus alone, and to those who are one with him. Having all the inexpressible excellencies that are in these two words, and yet not claiming or asking one thing for himself, but doing everything for others, suffering everything, bearing everything for others, meek and lowly. He "went about doing good" all the time. Think of the numberless phrases, words, expressions, sentences, in all the Bible, in which this most wonderful characteristic of the dear Son of God is presented: "meek and lowly in heart."

And this is given, this glorious characteristic of Jesus, as the reason why his people should take his yoke upon them. I have realized in my own soul that by nature I have not the least of that peculiar quality, but the opposite, and yet I have sometimes felt my admiration of the dear Savior, in this respect, to so include this very grace of the High-

est, as that I could see that, with other of his unspeakable graces, within my own soul, as something belonging to me though "less than the least of all saints," in Jesus. Only in Jesus can any grace of the Spirit be seen in any such sinner as I.

Those who are yoked together must be alike. An ox and an ass must not be yoked together under the law, and the servants of Christ must not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. (2 Cor. vi. 14.) When Jesus calls his people to take his yoke upon them they become one with him, as working in that gospel field. Not that they are working with him, as two men may work together, but they are working in him. That is a most wonderful union. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." How can two walk or work together except they be agreed? He is in the midst of his people who have taken his yoke upon them, individually, and as the church of the living God. What close and sacred responsibilities there are resting upon the Lord's dear people on account of this precious yoke, which they have taken upon them. How carefully and anxiously they question themselves as to that yoke of Jesus, and as to whether it is manifest as upon them. Jesus said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me."

When exercised by this meek and lowly Spirit of Christ all of the children of God do feel what is expressed in the twenty-seventh Psalm: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple." Jesus was given the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord, and all heavenly graces, (Isaiah xi. 2,) not for himself, but for his people, in the work of salvation, which he had wrought for them and in them, that they might learn of him, as the only true and lasting source of heavenly knowledge and understanding. He ascended upon high and received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. (Psalms lxviii.) These gifts he gave unto his people, and in the exercise of these gospel gifts they take his yoke upon them and are learning of him.

The legal yoke was hard and a great and sorowful burden to bear. The gospel shows that yoke broken and removed when Jesus died for our sins and rose again for our justification. But the Lord's people when brought into the knowledge and liberty of the gospel have so high an estimate of the glorious gospel duties, and blessings, and privileges, and so great a sense of their own unworthiness, and inability, and great lack of wisdom, that they are very likely to shrink back when called upon by the church to exercise the gifts which the church recognizes in them. So when exercised by a desire to be baptized, they always feel that this cannot be the duty of those so sinful, weak and unworthy as they feel themselves to be. When the call to preach the gospel is felt in the heart they are most sure to feel that

the Lord would not call such a worm of the dust to preach the gospel. But the Lord never calls in vain. With a tender regard for their doubts as to whether so holy a work can be for them to do, he says to them, "For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

In the keeping of the dear Savior's commands there is great reward. In, not for, keeping them. Those who take the Savior's yoke upon them do nothing in that line with a view to some reward which they expect to receive for the work. The life and Spirit of Jesus in their souls is leading them. If they had such expectations of reward how disappointed they would be, for the life of a true and faithful minister of the gospel is sure to be a life of trial more or less severe. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." In his own soul what afflictions, what stumblings, what falls, what sorrows, and the hardest of trials to bear are those which he can never tell, except as they are made known by prayer and supplication to Jesus. Nevertheless those who have experienced the taking of this yoke of Jesus upon them do find rest to their souls, for his yoke is easy, and his burden is light.

Notwithstanding all the worldly trials and all the soul afflictions "there's something secret sweetens all." Voices expressing joy and praise and thanksgiving have been heard through prison windows, unspeakable blessings have been experienced under the sharpest persecutions, and under the fiercest assaults of the devil the soul has been made so sweetly to rejoice that those who wait upon the Lord have been enabled to renew their strength, to mount up with wings as eagles, to run and not be weary, to walk in all the ways and ordinances of the Lord and not faint. (Isaiah xl. 31.)

Ruth had no desire to return with Orpha to her own people and her father's house, but looked with a longing desire toward the land and people and God of Naomi; so the Lord's people are given an inextinguishable desire to dwell and work in the gospel fields and among the Lord's dear people. Boaz said to Ruth, "The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust." But what reward could she desire who was doing what she would rather do than anything else in the world? When the yoke upon us takes us into fields of work which suit us exactly, and fill our souls with delight, that yoke often seems most harsh and disagreeable, and the work very wearisome, but how different it is when the love of Christ constraineth us in the work. When the love of God is felt in the soul we can desire nothing more; then everything attending the gospel yoke is easy, and every burden we may be called upon to bear is light. How dear and good and kind it is of the precious Savior to say such delightful words to us in our loneliness, and sorrow, and great unworthiness, and thus take us so close to his heart in his tender compassion.

April, 1915.

FRAGMENTS

Is an important message any more or less important because of the manner in which it is delivered? If the message is brought to us accompanied by sound of sweetest music to the natural ear, is it any sweeter or more valuable to our souls on that account? The manner in which the gospel is preached does not affect its power, though our feelings may be greatly affected toward the one who delivers the message in an unbecoming manner. It is not the tones of music or sounds of eloquence falling upon the ear which those want who are hungering and thirsting after righteousness, but the message of love and peace and good will to men. It is this which fills with delight the heart of the quickened sinner. The hungry soul wants the word of which the psalmist speaks: "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart." No man can produce hunger in himself at will, nor can any one provide for himself that which will satisfy a hunger for righteousness. Only the blessing of God which caused that hunger can supply that which will satisfy it. No one can be taught by man how to sing and make melody in his heart unto the Lord; but when the grace of God is felt with divine power, then the melody of the holy message is already there, singing in the soul, however common the language in which it was spoken, and the soul rejoices in the melody.

I have often felt sorry for those whom the Lord puts into the ministry, counting them faithful, while I am glad for the church in whose service they are called, for she needs those faithful men, and the Lord counts only such as his workmanship. He causes all of his ministers to be true and tried and faithful. But I sympathize deeply with them, for I know something of what they must suffer. It is not an easy thing for one to "learn to preach," as it is for the world's preachers. They cannot learn their lessons "by heart," like a schoolboy. But the Lord's ministers are learning all the time, and have to go over and over, again and again, the same old lessons, which seem to be still new. They have to go over the things through many a dark day and many a stormy night. They must keep getting new things through new experiences of tribulation and sorrow, to tell to the people, and then they find that the new things are as old as the oldest experience of grace. The path of the Lord's servants lies along by things that are all the time "both new and old." How often we try to get away from our lessons, to get away from the hard learning, feeling sure that this new trial that seems to be coming upon us will surely make us unable to preach at all any more, it is so dark and direful in appearance. But we must go through the fire and through the darkness, for so the Lord has said. No one on earth can help us here; no one can tell us or show us how to preach. The best preacher that ever lived on earth, except Jesus, if he were with us all the time, could not give us one successful lesson in this wonderful work of preach-

ing the gospel. Each one must learn his own lessons, and each must do his own preaching. He must by himself take from the Lord's treasurehouse all the things that belong to him, both new and old. No one can hand him one thing that will be of any use to him in his work; he must receive it for himself, as the gift of Jesus to the church through him, and made known as his by the teaching of the Holy Spirit.

"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me."—Psalms li. 5. The psalmist did not present this fact as an excuse in any way for a depraved nature, or as in any degree a palliation of the evil of sinful acts. He did not say, I inherited a sinful disposition, and committed sins before I knew what sin was, and therefore I ought not to be blamed as one who knew he was doing wrong, nor punished for iniquities committed in ignorance. The natural man will reason this way, but not the man who has been quickened by divine life. The psalmist was not seeking to avoid blame by tracing his life back before his birth; his spiritual mind does not seek an excuse for sin, but acknowledges the justice of his condemnation. The convicted sinner acknowledges the Lord's right to desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden parts to know wisdom. In order that we may learn this true wisdom in the hidden parts of the soul the wickedness of our nature must be seen and felt by us in the sight of God, that he may be just when he speaks and clear when he judges. (Psalms li. 4.)

"For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth."—Rom. ix. 17. (Exodus ix. 16.) All that took place in the history of Pharaoh must have been according to God's eternal purpose, which he purposed in himself before the world began. Every purpose of God must be like himself, eternal, and must be infinitely wise and holy, and for the best good of his people and for the honor and glory of his most holy name.

I will read again from the inspired Scriptures of truth: "For it was of the Lord to harden their hearts, that they should come against Israel in battle, that he might destroy them utterly, and that they might have no favor, but that he might destroy them."—Joshua xi. 20. What we want is to know what the Bible teaches. We can understand it only so far as the Lord shall be pleased to give us understanding. We are carefully told that those who crucified the Savior with wicked hands did what God's hand and counsel determined before to be done. (Acts iv. 28.) We know that the Lord does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and that he has an infinitely wise and holy and gracious purpose in everything that takes place, but too deep for us to understand. He hates sin with a perfect hatred, and it cannot be thought that he regards it in his predestination in the same way that he regards holiness; yet sin

is in the world, which could not have been the case if the Lord had not so purposed. He must have purposed all things after the counsel of his own will, as is plainly declared in the Scriptures of truth. Things which are wicked in them that do them are clearly shown to be embraced in the purpose of God, who declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. (Isaiah xlvi. 10, 11.) Concerning such things the apostle tells us plainly what the natural man will say: "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" I acknowledge that this is what I have felt at times. But the apostle does not undertake to explain or reason with us upon this deep mystery, but rebukes the opposition of our carnal minds: "Nay but, O man, who are thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"

I do not want to be found replying against God. He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." I am thankful to be among those who are crying for mercy, for I need it all the time.

What a terrible thing it would be if our God were limited in any sense, or in any degree. When war's tumults are abroad in the earth, and wicked men are filling the world with crime and misery and desolation and mourning, how restful it is to remember that our God has all power in heaven and in earth; that he doeth his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; that he maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth, (Psalms xlvi. 7,) and that when he will he can cause this terrible conflict to come to an end, and can at any time cause sorrowing souls to rejoice in the peace of God, and to break forth into singing the Lord's song of peace on earth and good will to men. How good it is to trust in the God of purpose and power and grace. "He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth." The gospel presents this work finished in the experience of every heaven-born soul.

MAY, 1915.

THE TERROR OF THE LORD

To one who has been given to rejoice in the Lord, and in the wonders of his love and grace, it seems very strange that such an expression as this could be used concerning him by the inspired apostle. It is hard to understand how one who has felt the sweet love of God in his heart can ever feel afraid of him; and especially that he could ever have terror in thinking of him. But the apostle was inspired to tell all the varied experiences that any of the Lord's people may have, and to set in order all the doctrine and experience of the gospel church, as commanded by the dear Savior. The Scriptures of truth thoroughly furnish the man of God "unto all good works," and no child of God will ever lack any provision in the Bible for his need, in whatever case or circumstance he may be found. The Holy Spirit will surely

be with him at the right time, taking of the things of Jesus and showing them to him, and if such an one never sees a Bible his need will be just as surely supplied; all his experiences, whether dark or bright, will be told to him by the Holy Spirit. The apostle implies, here and elsewhere, that a child of God may voluntarily do that which is sinful, and receive punishment for it. We are not told that a Christian can transgress the law of Moses, for he is not under that law. But "we are under law to Christ." "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." The apostle in this connection is talking in a wonderfully sweet way of the exercises of the apostles in their suffering and labor which were necessary in their apostolic work. I can hardly refrain from writing somewhat upon the subject of these two, fourth and fifth, chapters of this second letter to the Corinthians, but I wrote upon this portion of the Scriptures several years ago, and now I have on my mind more particularly the ninth and tenth verses of the fifth chapter of 2 Corinthians: "Wherefore we labor, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things *done* in *his* body, according to that he hath done, whether *it be* good or bad." This is the judgment-seat of Christ, as set up in the gospel church. He is our judge, and his word is forever settled in heaven. We may say that this judgment-seat of Christ is set up in the heart of the true believer. In his conscience the judgment is given. Some one has said the believer cannot sin cheaply. In his conscience the decision is rendered, and his punishment begins, and whatever we have done, whether good or bad, we must receive it. Remove the italicized words and the meaning is still clear. If what we have done be bad it will remain with us to worry and distress us. The conscience will hold it to us, and will keep it before us, and the exercise of the mind concerning it will be "according to that we have done, whether good or bad." There can be no rest for the transgressor while that which the conscience does not approve remains with us. We are before the judgment-seat of Christ, and it is of him we must be accepted. When we carefully consider this we can see how necessary the word "terror" is, as used by the apostle in the case of the willful transgressor against the law of Christ.

In the eighty-ninth Psalm it is said by the Father, concerning the establishment of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ, "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments: then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. * * * His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me." The punishment of those who are transgressors of the law of Christ, and who are before his throne, as all are who have been born of God, must be sure and fearful, as it

is declared it is, but not one of them can ever be lost. The apostle gives his decision concerning the judgment of one: that he shall be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. (1 Cor. v. 5.) He manifests no uncertainty as to the salvation of that sinner, though his crime was great, but afterward directs the church to forgive him and comfort him, counting his punishment sufficient. (2 Cor. ii. 6.) The conscience that has been made tender in the fear of the Lord will tell the transgressor very soon where the wrong and sin are. If he has been born of God he will feel the sin as quickly as the naked hand would feel the touch of fire. If he has not been born of the Spirit he will feel no trouble on account of sin, he will know nothing of the judgment-seat of Christ. This judgment-seat of Christ, and all these gospel things, are nothing to the natural man, but they are very much to the living soul. If he has done well the answer of the good conscience is his, and is very precious; if he has done bad his punishment is sure, and that is also precious, bringing the poor, heartbroken sinner into the lowest, humblest place, in the dust of self-abasement, and exalting the dear Savior beyond all ability to sufficiently praise and adore his dear and holy name.

The apostle speaks of sinning willfully. Some have thought that all sin is willful. That is so in a sense, but we easily distinguish what is willful in any ordinary thing, from what is not so. Have we never done a thing we knew was wrong? Have we never persisted in the wrong, and do we know nothing of the bitterness of the punishment in our own souls, and our final sorrow and grief on account of our transgression before the Savior? It certainly appears here that the apostle is admonishing and exhorting his brethren, and warning them concerning the judgment-seat of Christ, before which we must all appear, now, here, in our daily experience, when we are made manifest, as the apostles were in the consciences of their brethren, to whom, and of whom they spake. An exhortation is clearly understood here to avoid doing that which is bad, knowing the terror of the Lord. We would far rather be absent from the body in our experience to-day, and present with the Lord, than to have all that this world can give and be absent from the Lord, to feel him cold and distant from us, and frowning upon us. The apostle makes this clear in writing to the Hebrews: x. 24-31. "For if we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." The apostle had exhorted the brethren to provoke one another unto love and good works, and had named the first and principal good work of the brethren, upon which the works all depend: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more as ye see the day approaching." The power and coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is what the saints

are always looking for "and hastening unto," whenever they are spiritually-minded. They are looking for him, and "unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time, without sin, unto salvation." —Heb. ix. 28. To forsake the assembling of ourselves together is a fearful sin. It is a willful sin. Not merely staying away from meeting when some special reason seems to us sufficient to keep us at home (though it may not be really sufficient in the sight of God), but refusing to meet with the brethren. This is what the apostle appears to mark with such fearful emphasis as a great transgression.

The twenty-seventh verse seems to state the mind of one who, after having received the knowledge of the truth, turns away from its precepts and order. There is nothing he can do, no offering he can make, as those could who transgressed the law of Moses, but a fearful looking for of judgment. There appears no possible deliverance for him. The only sacrifice possible has already been made by the Savior, and the judgment rendered; but this transgressor does not think such a thing possible, as that the judgment can be in any way for his deliverance, but only to devour him as an adversary. He does not know yet that the adversaries are in his own sinful nature, and in his deceitful heart, and that they shall be destroyed. This transgressor can see and feel the judgment against him by the law of Moses, and how no mercy could be extended to him by that law. If he despise that law he must die. "Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" We might think these three terrible, wicked things could never be done by a child of God, but must certainly designate only a child of the devil. But we remember that these characters have received the knowledge of the truth, have been brought under law to Christ, have been sanctified by the blood of the covenant, and have received the Spirit of grace. None of these things could be true of the natural man. We remember also that in each case vengeance or punishment belongs unto the Lord; that "the Lord will judge his people." No one can transgress a law he is not under. These, then, according to the statement of the apostle, are children of God, who have transgressed the law of Christ, and the apostle solemnly says, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy?" The punishment for transgressing Moses' law was death. How could a law punishment that does not inflict death be greater than one which does take the life of the sinner? As the life of a child of God is higher, holier than the natural life, infinitely purer and eternal, so is the punishment of him who possesses that holy, spiritual life sorer than the punishment by natural pain and natural death. "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand." The apostle here and elsewhere dwells upon the importance of good works because of

grace, and also because of the terror of the Lord. It is not for fear of physical pain or natural terror, but because of the love of Christ, that he is constrained to reprove, exhort and admonish the brethren. But when the poor, tried soul has been sorely afflicted, the apostle exhorts the brethren to confirm their love toward him, and most affectionately to comfort him. (2 Cor. ii. 7, 8.) The apostle says, "The love of Christ constraineth us." This is true of all the inspired apostles in all their apostolic work. It is also true, in measure, of all who have been born of God, who have the love of God in their souls. That wonderful love of God "passeth knowledge." It is the dearest and most priceless thing that can ever be known by man. "He that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." When once it is known by any one it can never be taken from him. It can never be lost. It is the one holy, satisfying principle that remains forever. It may appear to be lost for a time, but that can only be in appearance. God is love, and he is unchangeable, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." It is love that makes it such a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. It is that which causes one to feel "the terror of the Lord." It is unspeakably terrible to one who has felt the love of God in his soul to fear that it is gone from him; that he can feel it no more. While we had it in undisputed exercise in our souls the comfort and joy of it were unspeakable. Now the thought that it has been taken from us brings terrible distress. Whatever form the punishment for our sins may take, it is the love of God, the remembrance of that sweet love, and the thought that it can be ours no more, that makes the punishment so terrible and so full of grief and misery. All the evil propensities of our nature are brought out to our view, and appear like evil beasts and venomous reptiles, to aggravate our distress. These adversaries cannot go beyond their appointed effect upon us. It may be that one has been felt to blaspheme, or to disregard the sweet principles of obedience in some special sin, and he may suffer separation from the church. The apostle says, "Whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme." All of the Lord's people will receive at his hands whatever he has in store for them from day to day while they are in this mortal tabernacle, in which they groan. Every stroke that is needed will be given them; every promise that has ever been made in behalf of the poor and needy will be fulfilled. Not one stroke too many shall ever be given to one of them; not one promise too few. All will be to the declarative glory of God while here, and all shall come up out of all their great tribulation into eternal glory.

> "In all their afflictions his glory shall spring,
> And the deeper their sorrows the louder they'll sing."

Concerning those on the left hand of the King, and their punishment, I can say nothing descriptive, only repeating the words of the King: "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." They are repre-

sented as never having the love of God in their hearts. All who ever knew the love of God, or who ever shall, are on the right hand of the King, who is infinitely just and infinitely loving. Those who have that love once have it from everlasting. However far they may have gone astray, however dark and terrible may have been the judgment rendered at any time against them, and however heavy their sorrows on account of their sins, through Jesus Christ they shall feel the fullness of his love. No one in that everlasting kingdom of love shall feel that he is in the least degree better than another, but each and all shall forever join in singing to the praise of the one blessed name, Jesus.

SEPTEMBER, 1915.

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